Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred

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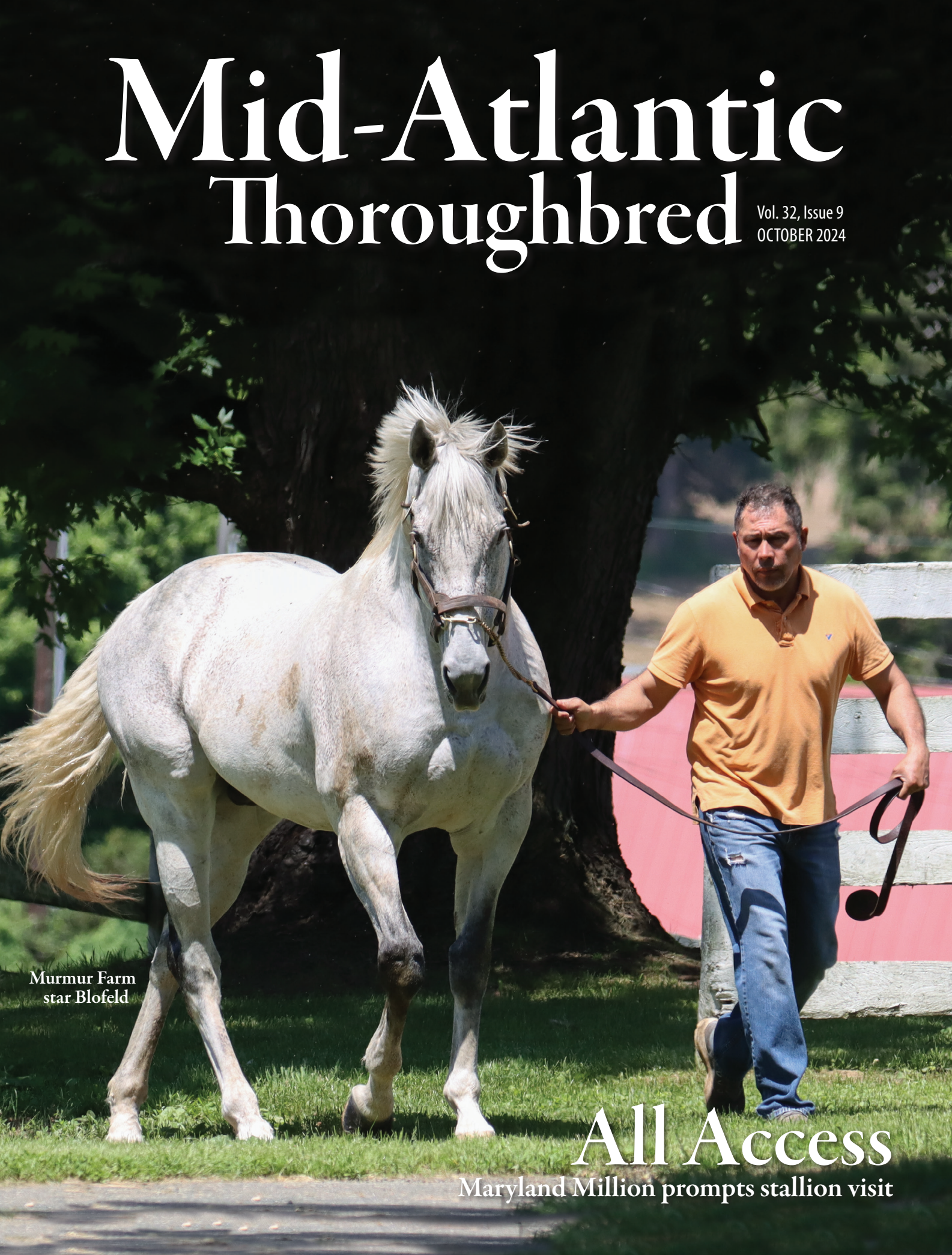

Murmur Farm star Blofeld

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Maryland Million prompts stallion visit

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BREEDING: Significant update to family of CLF mare Kenda, when her sister produced Aug. 24 Gr. 1 H. Allen Jerkens S. winner DOMESTIC PRODUCT.

Christy Holden

RACING: Divining Rod filly DIVINE WORKS, MD-bred purchased from breeder Katharine M. Voss, a strong second in MSW at Saratoga.

Maddie Becker/Coady Photos

BREEDING: MD-bred FULMINEO, out of CLF mare Starr of Quality, won July 13 $125,000 Boston S. at Colonial Downs.

Jim McCue

RACING: COVERT KAT wins at Laurel on Sept. 7. The $30,000 FT Midlantic sales purchase has earned $176,970.

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Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred

— Set List —

Maryland Million's leading men

They're old, young, energetic, fun, demanding, easygoing – and important. Get on the road and meet the stallions who power the Maryland Million racing program. By Vinnie Perrone. Page 22

Trackside: Monmouth Park

Trainer Eddie Owens Jr. enjoys powerhouse day of New Jersey-bred triumphs after losing potential star Little Ni. By Paul Halloran. Page 37

Dean Delivers and keeps delivering

Trainer Ned Allard and longtime client Stonehedge have been on a roll with homebred Dean Delivers, who won four stakes at three Mid-Atlantic tacks this summer. By John Piassek. Page 40

Trackside: Timonium

Homebred Band Camp rides winning streak to new heights for trainer Annette Eubanks and her son Dan. By Joe Clancy. Page 44

Trackside: Colonial Downs

Maryland-based Trikari wins Grade 2 Secretariat on Arlington Million Day, with eyes on even bigger challenges. By Ali Çetinok. Page 48

Trackside: Charles Town

With 20 wins – and counting – call Penguin Power a model racehorse for owner David Raim and trainer Jeff Runco . By Joe Clancy. Page 52

Steeplechase Times: Summer Fun

New York's Saratoga and Virginia's Colonial Downs showcase summer jump racing. By Joe and Sean Clancy. Page 58

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On our cover: Successful young stallion Blofeld, with Jose Macias, heads back to the barn at Murmur Farm. *Photo by George Adams.*

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Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred

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Post Time

NIGHT RIDER. Skippylongstocking and jockey Jose Ortiz light up Charles Town while winning the $1 million Charles Town Classic-G2 Aug. 23. Also the victor in 2023, Skippylongstocking earned $564,000 to pass $2.9 million in career earnings for trainer Saffie Joseph Jr. *Scott Serio / Eclipse Sportswire*

SKIPPYLONGSTOCKING

Say It Again

"I tried yesterday with Great Notion and quickly discovered two things. I'm not a photographer, and he has become boring in his old age. Guess I have also."
Northview Stallion Station's David Wade, about getting photos of Great Notion for an article

"It's a great time to call me, Ali. What are you doing, baby?"
Bloodstock agent Bob Feld, answering a phone call from MAT's Ali Cetinok

"I'm not a zillionaire so I'm not in this to lose money. It's run like a business. I couldn't have this many horses if it wasn't."
Owner David Raim, on the methodology behind his racing ventures

"He gets remembered as he should. He deserves a race."
West Virginia Breeders Classics co-founder Carol Holden, on naming a race for 31-time winner Russell Road this year

"I've been there since 8:30 and this isn't my job. I'm on my way to my real job."
Owner Dan Eubanks, at 3:45 p.m. on a Friday spent holding horses for the blacksmith

Names of the Month

Compiled by Lexi Danielson

Snack. The 4-year-old Maryland-bred gelding is by Twirling Candy out of the Pure Prize mare Plum. Sold twice by breeder Dark Hollow Farm, he finished second at Timonium Aug. 31.

Take a Hint. Bred and named by Cynthia and Charles McGinnes, the gray gelding's first stakes win came in March's Not For Love Stakes. Fitting, as he's by Bandbox out of Fancy Diamond.

Damn the Torpedoes. Wind Dancer Stable's 6-year-old mare represents Maryland on the West Coast. She's by Air Force Blue out of Taketheodds and won the 11th race of her career at Winnipeg's Assiniboia Downs.

Doesn'thurttoflirt. The 3-year-old filly, bred by Maryland-based Greenspring Mares and owned by Housatonic Stables, Oh Happy Days Stable, Steve Crabtree and KMR Racing Stables, is out of the Broken Vow mare I'm Engaged.

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Milestones

Closed:

To all training and simulcast activity, Baltimore's Pimlico Race Course, effective Sept. 1 as part of the Pimlico Plus plan focused on redeveloping the property as the year-round home to Thoroughbred racing in Maryland. Overseen by the Maryland Thoroughbred Racing Operating Authority and the Maryland Stadium Authority, the plan was expected to progress to sitework and demolition this fall. On Jan. 1, 2025, day-to-day racing and training operations at Laurel Park will transfer from The Stronach Group to the MTROA. Laurel will host day-to-day racing in 2025, 2026 and into 2027. The 150th Preakness Stakes in May 2025 will be run at Pimlico, with the 2026 edition hosted at Laurel. The 2027 Preakness is expected to run at Pimlico, which will ultimately become the state's main racetrack with training there and at a training center at a to-be-determined site.

Announced:

Several changes to the racing department at Charles Town racetrack. Duane Sowers was promoted to assistant director of racing operations from racing manager and clerk of scales at the track. Sowers' time in the Charles Town racing office began more than four decades ago, and his roots run deep in the Charles Town racing community as the son of former Charles Town racing secretary, the late Lonnie Sowers. Anna Hibbard was promoted to racing secretary after serving as assistant racing secretary. Hibbard, an alumna of the University of Arizona Race Track Industry Program, has been a mainstay in Charles Town for more than eight years. Brenna Ward was promoted to assistant racing secretary. Track announcer Paul Espinosa added the role of racing media administrator to his duties.

Approved:

More than $1 million in grants to 86 organizations, by Thoroughbred Charities of America. The group included 45 aftercare organizations, 20 backstretch and farm worker programs, six equine-assisted therapy organizations, three Thoroughbred incentive programs and one research organization. Grant recipients can be found at tca.org.

Battling:

Among horses near the top of North America's victory list for 2024, several with Mid-Atlantic connections. The well-traveled Kentucky-bred Tennessee Moon led the way with nine wins

Go Figure

14: Horses who won two races at the 2024 Colonial Downs meet. Nobody won three.

3: Wins on the Sept. 6 card at Colonial Downs, trainer Chuck Lawrence. Based at Fair Hill Training Center in Maryland and at Delaware Park, Lawrence sent out Chez Soleil ($29) to win the ninth race, Wow Whata Party ($17) to take the 10th and Reconvene ($31.60) to victory in the 11th. The all-Lawrence pick three paid $1,204.90.

2: New millionaires among the trainees of Parx Racing-based Butch Reid as Neecie Marie and Morning Matcha both passed the seven-figure line this summer. Morning Matcha, racing for LC Racing, Cash Is King and Gary Barber, won the $100,000 Mrs. Penny Stakes for Pennsylvania-breds at Parx Aug. 26 to get there first. Bred by Crane Thoroughbred Services, the 5-year-old daughter of Central Banker improved to 8-for-28 while reaching $1,029,940 through Sept. 14. Neecie Marie, owned by Michael Milam, won the Ladies Marathon Stakes-G3 at Kentucky Downs to reach $1,147,750 in career earnings Sept. 7. Bred by Jon Marshall, the 4-year-old daughter of Cross Traffic won the 2023 Mrs. Penny and has won or placed in six graded stakes since.

Milestones

(through Sept. 14) at Delta Downs, Fonner Park, Energy Downs and Arapahoe. Maryland-bred Band Camp (see article in the Trackside section) was in a six-way tie for second with seven wins. Spikezone, now trained by Jamie Ness, was also among that group with seven, including two each at Delaware Park and Parx Racing. The Anthony Farrior-trained Gran Andrews posted all seven of his wins at Charles Town.

Presented:

The inaugural Penny Chenery Award, to author/historian Leeanne Meadows Ladin of Montpelier, Va. Established by Chenery's children, the award recognizes a woman who has demonstrated outstanding sustained commitment to celebrating the achievements and legacies of Thoroughbred champions, for the benefit of the horse industry and the education of the public.

Pensioned:

And moved to the Old Friends Thoroughbred retirement farm, Pennsylvania stallion Warrior's Reward. A foal of 2006, Warrior's Reward won four races headed by the 2010 Carter Handicap-G1 and placed in five graded stakes before starting a stud career at Spendthrift Farm. The son of Medaglia d'Oro later moved to Pennsylvania and last stood at WynOaks Farm in Delta. He is the state's second-leading sire by 2024 numbers, through Sept. 18, with $2,014,225 in progeny earnings and 56 winners. His sons and daughters include graded stakes winner and $966,442-earner Night Ops and Grade 3 winners Axelrod and Warrior's Club.

Pensioned:

And retired to the farm of owner Centennial Farms, Pennsylvania stallion Wicked Strong, who last stood at Pin Oak Lane Farm in New Freedom. A foal of 2011, Wicked Strong won the 2014 Wood Memorial-G1 and finished fourth behind California Chrome in the Kentucky Derby-G1 for Centennial and trainer Jimmy Jerkens. Also fourth in the Belmont Stakes-G1, the son of Hard Spun won the Jim Dandy-G2 that summer and was beaten a nose when second to the Jerkens-trained V.E. Day in the Travers Stakes-G1. Wicked Strong won just three races, but earned $1,994,460 thanks to five graded stakes-placings. Among his foals are 2020 Remsen Stakes-G1 winner Brooklyn Strong and Group 2 winner Wicked Crane. Originally named Moyne Spun, Wicked Strong was renamed after the bombing at the Boston Marathon in 2013. Centennial pledged a portion of his earnings to the One Fund, a charity created to assist those affected, and he helped raise $34,000 directly and more through other donations. He was gelded and sent to his original stallion home at Kentucky's Spendthrift Farm before joining Centennial stakes runners Mihos and Securitiz at Centennial's Ipswich, Mass., farm.

THE RACING BIZ

The Independent Voice for Mid-Atlantic Racing and Breeding

Franco's magnificent seven: Jockey Manny Franco's talents were on full display at Colonial Downs Sept. 7 as he won seven races and nearly swept the track's six stakes. The only card he rode during the meet, his wins included the Grade 3 Virginia Derby aboard Deterministic and a dead heat aboard Style Points in the Virginia Oaks reports Nick Hahn.

Jean Valjean wins third straight: The horse version of Jean Valjean doesn't have any need to redeem himself; he can just keep doing what he's been doing. The Pennsylvania-bred recorded his third consecutive win when taking Penn National's Don't Close Your Eyes Stakes, on the evening of Aug. 30, Frank Vespe reports.

Pimlico – safe haven, keeper of memories, home: Exercise rider and former jockey Emily Fewster reflects on the last days of the current version of Pimlico, her racing home.

"Money" Mike Smith's adventurous visit to Charles Town: Hall of Fame jockey Mike Smith had quite a visit to Charles Town that included a gate scratch, a last-place finish, and a win in the Grade 2 Charles Town Oaks, reports Vespe.

Future Is Now, Roses for Debra tussle at The Spa: Teresa Genaro reports on the Midlantic-breds who dominated Saratoga's distaff turf sprint division in 2024: Maryland-bred Future Is Now and Pennsylvania-breds Roses for Debra and Dontlookbackatall, the latter headed to Kentucky Downs.

Determined Kingdom rules at Colonial

By Joe Clancy

Quick, anybody know the horse with the most wins in the history of Colonial Downs racetrack?

Neither do we.

If Determined Kingdom keeps up his fine work at the New Kent, Va., racetrack, he might at least be in the conversation. Trained by Phil Schoenthal for Determined Stables and Kingdom Bloodstock, the 5-year-old Animal Kingdom gelding won twice there this summer to improve to 6-for-10 at the track.

In 2021, he won the Jamestown Stakes. In 2022, he scored in the Punch Line Stakes. Last year, he captured another Punch Line and added the Meadow Stable. This year, he made it three Punch Lines in a row July 20 and tacked on a second Meadow Stable victory Aug. 31.

"If he keeps going for a couple more years, they might have to build a statue of him," Schoenthal said with a laugh in September. "He really likes the turf course down there. Obviously, the bulk of the races he runs in there are restricted company. But this year he's taken a step forward and is a legitimate open-company stakes horse."

Bred in Virginia by Audley Farm, Determined Kingdom gets to play in state-bred/certified company at Colonial – the Punch Line, Meadow Stable and Jamestown are all restricted – but there's more to it. Away from the friendly confines, he won a tough allowance race at Laurel Park to start 2024 and has placed in stakes at Turfway Park and Saratoga Race Course. Even at Colonial this summer, he jumped into the open-company Van Clief Stakes and finished third Aug. 11.

COADY MEDIA / MARK FLANDERS

A third Punch Line Stakes win for Determined Kingdom came on July 20.

Schoenthal called 2024 a prove-it year for his horse, who headed to October with three wins in four starts and $223,350 earned this season. The success pushed his career totals to nine wins in 23 starts and a $671,539 bankroll.

"The question in our mind was whether he was legitimate open-company horse or was he going to be state-company kind of horse?" said Schoenthal, who won seven races from 22 starts at the meet. "If he wasn't going to take a step forward, his path was going to be wait for Colonial until he doesn't want to do it anymore. He's proven to us he's a little bit better than that."

Schoenthal can't pinpoint a reason for the improvement, but credited maturity and a schedule that provides a lengthy winter break. Determined Kingdom hasn't raced beyond September since his 2-year-old season of 2021 and his off-season regimen now includes turnout time with stakes-winning retiree Sonny Inspired at co-owner Matt Dorman's Kentucky farm.

"He's a very, very sound horse, loves to train, basically trains himself, and I don't see any reason why he couldn't come back for several more seasons," Schoenthal said. "It's neat to have a campaigner like that. He reminds me a lot of Sonny Inspired – just a racehorse, knows his job, goes out there and performs and is fun to be around."

Based at Fair Hill Training Center in Maryland, Schoenthal got a first-hand account of the horse's attitude this year.

"At Laurel and Colonial I was the one with him most of the day," the trainer said. "You sit in your lawn chair in front of the stall, he knows it's race day, and he's thrilled about it. He wants to chew on your hat, give you kisses and be proud of himself. He knows something big is going on. He's like a kid who gets himself up early, makes his own breakfast and is ready to go to a hockey game or summer camp."

Not bad for a horse used as an example at the Fasig-Tipton Midlantic yearling sale in 2020. Then, Dorman had ramped up his Thoroughbred investments with several well-bred fillies bought at higher-profile sales. Schoenthal wanted the owner to know the possibilities, even if the fillies didn't make the races, and showed Dorman Determined Kingdom – whose dam Filia cost Audley $200,000 as a yearling but never raced – at Timonium.

"If any of these fillies you bought don't end up being a racehorse, I want you to have a picture of what they might throw you someday as broodmares," Schoenthal told Dorman. "If they don't turn out be good racehorses, it isn't necessarily the end of the story."

Dorman wasn't buying at Timonium, but listened as Schoenthal showed off "just a beautiful horse, a beautiful yearling colt" who would hopefully fit the budget for another client. The next day, Dorman authorized buying the colt if no one else would.

"Determined Kingdom was my favorite horse in the horse sale, but I thought he might be more expensive than what I could afford and he was near the end of the sale," said Schoenthal, who landed the winning bid at $47,000. "Do I sit on my hands and wait? It's a real problem if you're trying to run a business. The one you like might be later, but the one you can afford might be now.

"All the credit goes to Matt for putting his money up to buy a horse when it was never part of the plan to buy a colt. He ended up with a really nice horse." ■

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Maryland hires Monmouth's Knauf for new role

The Maryland Thoroughbred Racetrack Operating Authority announced Sept. 16 that racing industry leader Bill Knauf will head a new non-profit entity critical to the future of Thoroughbred racing and wagering operations in Maryland.

Following a national search, Knauf was chosen to serve as the inaugural president and general manager of The Maryland Jockey Club Inc., a new 501(c)(4) organization that will manage and operate Thoroughbred racing in Maryland.

An industry professional for more than a quarter century with experience in major events such as the Breeders' Cup, Knauf serves as vice president of business development at Monmouth Park Racetrack in New Jersey.

"We have found the perfect person to lead Maryland's groundbreaking efforts to reimagine and renew the racing experience," said MTROA chairman Greg Cross. "Bill not only has operating experience, but the knowledge to embrace and deploy cutting-edge technology to increase wagering and profitability."

The MTROA will continue its role overseeing the restructuring of the Maryland Thoroughbred industry and its responsibility for the redevelopment of Pimlico and creation of a training facility.

Knauf, who will serve as a consultant to MTROA until beginning his new position Jan. 1, 2025, will also play a key role in the redevelopment of the Pimlico racecourse, which is getting underway, and support the running of the Preakness Stakes.

"Maryland racing has a storied history, and the passion of everyone from horsemen to fans runs deep. I look forward to helping drive the evolution of Pimlico Race Course and the Preakness," Knauf said. "I'd like to thank chairman Greg Cross, executive director Marc Broady, acting CEO Corey Johnsen and the MTROA board for this exciting and once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I also thank Dennis Drazin, chairman of Monmouth Park, and the great leadership team I worked with for the last 26 years. Monmouth will always remain special to me."

In 2007, Knauf was the contact with the Breeders' Cup for the 2007 Championship Day at Monmouth Park. Most recently, he was involved in the presentation of the Haskell Stakes, which drew more than 38,000 fans this year.

A native of Schenectady, N.Y., and a graduate of Tufts University and the University of Arizona Race Track Industry Program, Knauf began working at Monmouth in 1998, and has held a variety of positions with increasing responsibility, and now oversees all operational areas as well as the sports book for the facility.

Knauf will become a key leadership figure overseeing newly revised racing operations in Maryland – part of a historic $400 million investment in facilities approved by the Maryland General Assembly and Gov. Wes Moore.

In addition to racing and wagering, Knauf will develop and implement plans for catering, entertainment, events and more at Pimlico, helping fulfill a plan intended to create a hub of economic activity in Baltimore's Park Heights community and create a foundation for the future of Maryland racing.

Maryland racing will be conducted at Laurel Park until renovations at Pimlico are complete. However, the 2025 Preakness Stakes – the 150th running of the race – will be at Pimlico, and the 2026 event will be at Laurel.

The MTROA's plan supports Maryland's equine industry, which accounts for 25 percent of the state's agricultural base, roughly 28,000 jobs, and $3 billion in total economic impact. ■

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— Mid-Atlantic-bred Stakes Winners —

August 8 – September 12

Maryland-bred

FUTURE IS NOW, b.f., 2020, Great Notion—Past as Prelude, by Bernardini. B/O-R. Larry Johnson; T-Michael J. Trombetta. $150,000 Smart N Fancy S, Saratoga, Aug. 23.

IT'S HAMMERTIME, ch.c., 2022, Vekoma—Steady N Love, by Not For Love. B-ZWP Stable & Non Stop Stable; O-Eagle Up Stables, London Reid Thoroughbreds & Non Stop Stable; T-Gary Capuano. $100,000 First State Dash S, Delaware, Sept. 11.

MALIBU BEAUTY, b.m., 2018, Buffum—Slow and Steady, by Malibu Moon. B/O-ZWP Stable Inc. & Non Stop Stable; T-Gary A. Capuano. $75,000 All Brandy S, Laurel, Aug. 18.

RE MARKABLY, b.c., 2022, Hoppertunity—A Dicey Dame, by Colonel John. B/O-Lynn A. Ashby & William Gotwals; T-Lynn A. Ashby. $50,000 Dover S, Delaware, Aug. 14.

RICCIO, dk.b./br.g., 2020, Cross Traffic—Richetta, by Polish Numbers. B-Glenangus Farm LLC; O-Sterling Road Stables & LBR Racing Stable; T-Richard P. Sillaman. $75,000 Find S, Laurel, Aug. 18.

New Jersey-bred

HE'SPUREGOLD, b.g., 2018, Vancouver (Aus)—Smart N Classy, by Smart Strike. B-John Bowers Jr.; O-Roseland Farm Stable (Bowers); T-Kelly J. Breen. $100,000 Red Bank S, Monmouth, Sept. 2.

J J ZO ZO, dk.b./br.c., 2022, Sea Wizard—Lost Princess, by Stephen Got Even. B/O-Jose Armando Garcia; T-Jose Lozano Sanchez. $100,000 Smoke Glacken S, Monmouth, Sept. 7.

RIDING PRETTY, dk.b./br.f., 2020, Jack Milton—High Renaissance, by Girolamo. B/O-Holly Crest Farm; T-Eddie Owens Jr. $100,000 Eleven North H, Monmouth, Aug. 25.

SEA STREAK, b.g., 2021, Sea Wizard—High Noon Nellie, by Silver Deputy. B/O-Holly Crest Farm; T-Eddie Owens Jr. $125,000 Charles Hesse III H, Monmouth, Aug. 25.

SMITHWICK'S SPICE, b.g., 2016, Frost Giant—Spicy McHaggis, by Good and Tough. B/O-New Spice Stable LLC; T-Douglas Nunn. $100,000 Select S, Monmouth, Aug. 17.

CHRISTINE HAYDEN

PA-bred Neecie Marie won the $1,000,000 Light & Wonder Ladies Marathon-G3 at Kentucky Downs.

Pennsylvania-bred

CAPRICE, dk.b./br.f., 2022, Golden Lad—Grand Folly, by Street Cry (Ire). B-Gregory & Caroline Bentley Breeders; O-Runnymoore Racing LLC; T-Cathal A. Lynch. $50,000 Blue Hen S, Delaware, Aug. 14; $100,000 Small Wonder S, Delaware, Sept. 11.

CARMELINA, b.f., 2021, Maximus Mischief—Complete St., by St Averil. B-Lillith E. Boucher; O-Cash is King LLC & LC Racing LLC; T-Robert E. Reid Jr. $100,000 Penny Chenery S, Colonial, Aug. 11.

CRISPER, ch.g., 2019, Tapiture—Je Suis Enchantee, by Leroidesanimaux (Brz). B/O-Ascoli Piceno Stables LLC; T-Tim Woolley. $50,000 Summer Fun S, Penn National, Aug. 30.

GORDIAN KNOT, b.g., 2020, Social Inclusion—Mia, by Put It Back. B-Mr. & Mrs. Joe Imbesi; O-Briardale Stable; T-Jamie Ness. $100,000 Jump Start S, Parx, Aug 26.

IRISH CORK, gr./ro.g., 2017, Flat Out—Circustown Rose, by Wimbledon. B-Two-Turn Farm LLC; O-Irish Three Racing LLC; T-John C. Servis. $100,000 Storm Cat S, Parx, Aug. 26.

JEAN VALJEAN, ch.g., 2019, Uncle Lino—Lady's Tale, by Tale of the Cat. B/O-Hasting Farm; T-Elizabeth M. Merryman. $50,000 Don't Close Your Eyes S, Penn National, Aug. 30.

LADY OUTOFTHE BLUE, dk.b./br.m., 2019, Air Force Blue—Cubist, by Royal Academy. B-Jonathan Sheppard; O-John A. D'Amico; T-Michael R. Matz. $50,000 Fort Indiantown Gap S, Penn National, Aug. 30.

LATE FROST, dk.b./br.f., 2020, Frosted—La La's Cookin, by Harlan's Holiday. B-Gregory & Caroline Bentley Breeders; O-Runnymoore Racing LLC; T-Michael R. Matz. $75,000 Shine Again S, Timonium, Aug. 24.

MORNING MATCHA, b.m., 2019, Central Banker—Home Ice, by Iam the Iceman. B-Crane Thoroughbred Services LLC; O-LC Racing, Cash is King LLC & Gary Barber; T-Robert E. Reid Jr. $100,000 Mrs. Penny S, Parx, Aug. 26.

NEECIE MARIE, b.f., 2020, Cross Traffic—Lode Lady, by Posse. B-Jon A. Marshall; O-Milam Racing Stables; T-Robert E. Reid Jr. $1,000,000 Light & Wonder Ladies Marathon Stakes-G3, Kentucky Downs, Sept. 7.

SABURO'S GRACE, gr./ro.g., 2020, Saburo—Miz Graycee, by Mizzen Mast. B-Ruis Racing LLC; O-Barbara Norlander; T-Lyle W. Magnuson. $16,050 J.D.A. Raceway S, Grande Prairie, Aug. 25.

SMOOTH B, b.h., 2015, Weigelia—Katarica Disco, by Disco Rico. B-St. Omers Farm & WynOaks Farm LLC; O-LC Racing LLC; T-Robert E. Reid Jr. $100,000 Marshall Jenney H, Parx, Aug. 26.

Virginia-bred

WAR HUMOR, b.g., 2022, Mosler—Holywood Humor, by Distorted Humor. B-Nancy M. Rizer & Eric A. Rizer; O-Eric A. Rizer; T-Ollie L. Figgins III. $125,000 Jamestown S, Colonial, Aug. 31.

West Virginia-bred

HESSICA, dk.b./br.m., 2019, Juba—Stefani's Surprise, by Stephen Got Even. B/T-Kristy Lynn Petty; O-KP Racing Stables LLC. $75,000 Sadie Hawkins S, Charles Town, Aug. 23.

MAGGIE'S GIRL, b.f., 2020, Uncle Lino—Maginot Line, by First Defence. B-Tim Grams & Judy Grams; O-Grams Racing Stable LLC; T-Timothy C. Grams. $40,000 Autumn WVB Overnight S, Charles Town, Aug. 23.

PENGUIN POWER, ch.g., 2015, Fiber Sonde—Aye Robbin, by Robb. B-John D. McKee; O-David M. Raim; T-Jeff C. Runco. $40,000 Last Enchantment WVB Overnight S, Charles Town, Aug. 23.

TEACHINTHERELEASE, dk.b./br.g., 2020, Windsor Castle—Romantic Cork, by Denis of Cork. B-John A. Casey; O-Robert L. Cole Jr.; T-Stephen Murdock. $75,000 Frank Gall Memorial S, Charles Town, Aug. 23.

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The Mill

— Next Chapters —

BY MAGGIE KIMMITT

Celtic Innis

MAGGIE KIMMITT

"He's up in the long barn," Audrey Murray gestured in front of her home at Murmur Farm in Darlington, Md. "Wait until you see him."

Led out by Wilcon Cardona, the dark bay gelding is respectful but still pivots and spins, keenly interested in the mower manicuring a nearby paddock. His eyes are clear, sharp and laser-focused; his ears honed to the activity around him like radar. At 22, he is tall, broad and powerful. His seal-brown coat explodes with dapples.

Once he realizes a camera is pointed his way, he poses, stock still, first with Cardona and then with Murray. Her smile speaks volumes.

Along with her husband, the late E. Allen Murray Jr., Audrey bred, raised and raced Celtic Innis through seven seasons and $648,638 earned in their orange and green diamond silks. They stood his sire, Yarrow Brae, at Murmur Farm for several years. By Deputy Minister, Yarrow Brae won the 1998 Illinois Derby-G2 for Hall of Fame trainer D. Wayne Lukas.

Celtic Innis' dam Harp Innis won twice in Kentucky before being purchased by the Murrays for $47,000 in 1997. The daughter of Phone Trick produced six winners for the Murrays. Celtic Innis was by far her best, but full-brother Clever Yankee won six races including the 2006 H.B.P.A. Governor's Cup at Charles Town.

Celtic Innis was also one of the first horses the Murrays sent to trainer Tim Keefe.

"He was with me for all the years he was running," Keefe said. "I always remember a horse like this not just because he was very honest and a good racehorse – he won several races and accrued a good amount of earnings – but he was the type that always could run. What he really taught me more than any other horse was you never judge a book by its cover."

Keefe distinctly remembers being unimpressed when the ungainly youngster arrived at his Laurel Park barn in 2004.

"They sent me two or three 2-year-olds that year – and I remember first looking at him and he was big, awkward and very incorrect in front. Probably the type you really wouldn't bid on at an auction, to be honest with you. And I just sort of

rolled my eyes and thought, 'Oh my God, this horse will never amount to anything.' "

Day by day, Celtic Innis won over his trainer even if there were moments, like the gelding's first start at Pimlico Nov. 10, 2004, when Keefe's initial doubts again raised their ugly heads.

"I still remember being in the paddock for his first start at Pimlico. Allen Murray was with me, and Celtic Innis was walking around the paddock, the groom had the shank clipped underneath him – no shank over the nose or anything – and he was just walking around, first time out."

Keefe turned to Murray and said, "I don't know what kind of racehorse he's going to be, but if he's no racehorse he'll certainly be someone's nice show horse or something."

Celtic Innis never did make a show horse.

"He was very well mannered and just a lovely horse to be around," Keefe said. "But obviously, he did turn out to be a very good racehorse for us."

In three starts during his freshman season, Celtic Innis was third, second and first, respectively. Keefe brought him out as a 3-year-old in allowance races for his first three outings in 2005 before moving up to stakes company after scoring at Laurel March 31.

The horse then rewarded his connections with a win in that first black-type contest, the 6-furlong Maryland Stallion Station Stakes at Pimlico April 23, 2005. Two more victories followed – an allowance on the Preakness undercard and the Coronado's Quest Stakes at Monmouth June 11.

"He won the Coronado's Quest, which was not an easy race," Keefe said. "Then he went back [to Monmouth] and ran in the Jersey Shore Breeders' Cup Stakes-G3. Tommy Turner rode him again in that race, and he ran second to a horse called Joey P, who was unfreakinbelievable."

The occasional forays outside their home state were enjoyable – and usually fruitful – but to the Murrays, breeders since 1959, nothing matched Maryland Million Day.

"Obviously being owned by the Murrays and with my affinity for Maryland Million, it's our big day," Keefe said. "So we really geared his schedule around that, as I always have for all their horses. Come hell or high water, we'd try to make that race. And he did, almost every year."

To be precise, Celtic Innis entered the starting gate for the Maryland Million Sprint in 2006, 2008, 2009 and 2010. He won in 2008 and was second in the other three. So important was that race, the Murrays and Keefe chose it as the gelding's final start as an 8-year-old in 2010. Battling down the stretch, Celtic Innis lost by a half-length to Jack On the Rocks.

Celtic Innis retired with war-horse statistics of 45-9-12-12. In addition to the Coronado's Quest and Maryland Million Sprint he captured the Chesapeake Stakes at Colonial Downs and the Vincent Moscarelli Memorial at Delaware Park. He placed in 15 stakes, three graded.

> "He's up on the hill with the retired mares. He loves it. Normal maintenance, no issues. No one has been on his back. He's happy up there with his mares."
>
> *– Audrey Murray, about Celtic Innis*

The next logical step was a second career with Keefe's wife, Rumsey, an accomplished event rider. He was happy and healthy. It made sense. Just not to Celtic Innis.

"He never really settled into farm life, being in work and everything," Keefe said. "He loved his routine at the racetrack. He loved going out every morning at the same time, he loved his rider back then – Shannon Necker. And he was a little tough, too. Not easy to ride. He was good, but always very business-minded and never really acclimated to farm life and going out for hacks or going eventing and showing. He just never really clicked. We tried him for a little bit, but clearly his best stuff was going to be someplace where he could do the same thing every day, same time and everything. Audrey found a good niche for him at the farm as a babysitter. And he's obviously done great doing that."

After about six months with the Keefes, Celtic Innis returned to Murmur. That's fine with Audrey Murray, who has no problem with her horse's preferred retirement.

"He's up on the hill with the retired mares," she said. "He loves it. Normal maintenance, no issues. No one has been on his back. He's happy up there with his mares."

Mindset played a strong role with Celtic Innis on the racetrack, and not much has changed.

"You can't see it when you look at him, but he had that inner drive," Keefe said. "He had soundness, and he had the ability. He always wanted to win, to be the first one to get to the wire. And not a lot of them have that." ■

— From the editor —

BY JOE CLANCY

West Virginia's big night gallops into 38th year

Carol Holden never gets tired of giving people the number, and it keeps going up. West Virginia Breeders Classics night, the state's signature Thoroughbred racing/breeding event, will pass $32 million in purses distributed at its 38th running Oct. 12.

That's not a small figure.

The impact of the WVBC, founded by Holden and her partner Sam Huff, on the state's Thoroughbred industry can't be understated. Maryland started the trend of such state programs with the Maryland Million, first run in 1986, and it's been repeated almost anywhere horses race. But the state already boasted a rich Thoroughbred past with a Triple Crown race, legendary stallions, historic farms and impactful people. Back then, Maryland was probably second only to Kentucky when it came to Thoroughbred states – or at least in the conversation.

Thoroughbred racing and breeding were part of West Virginia's sporting past, but nobody was crowing about the state's stallions when the WVBC copied the Maryland Million concept. All these years later, West Virginia still isn't in anybody's national discussion, except maybe on Charles Town Classic night, but the hard work paid off with a relatively stable industry with stallions, mares and a racing program that works for the state and its horsemen.

Once a year, it all gets celebrated on WVBC night, which features races for every walk of West Virginia Thoroughbred – 2-year-olds, older horses, fillies and mares, sprinters, distance specialists – at Charles Town.

Holden credited Maryland Million's Rich Wilcke with providing expertise, background and contacts to get the WVBC started as a business. The Million, pushed by Marylander and ABC television host Jim McKay, copied the Breeders' Cup. West Virginia's concept, pushed by West Virginian and retired NFL star Huff, copied the Million.

We could use such regional cooperation now, when you think about it, even if Holden and Huff weren't sure the WVBC would get to the starting gate.

"We didn't know what was going to happen the first year," said Holden. "Sam had that never-say-die attitude but really at the time we had no idea. The vision was to promote the

industry and West Virginia. They were Sam's topics. That first year it was in September. Three months before the race, we couldn't announce it and couldn't promote."

Holden said the state's teachers were threatening to strike, and politicians were wary of publicly backing support for racing – even if the two issues were totally disconnected.

Huff, Holden and the rest were eventually allowed to go to work and the first night went to the post Sept. 11, 1987, with $200,000 in purses spread over five races. Local hero Onion Juice won the $100,000 feature. Steve Asmussen trained a winner ridden by his father. The state lottery and division of tourism sponsored races. Budweiser did too, thanks – maybe – to Huff's threat to have the beer trucks stopped at the state border if the deal didn't get signed. The former West Virginia University, New York Giants and Washington Redskins lineman/linebacker worked for Marriott in retirement, and knew how to make such connections.

ESPN covered the second edition in 1988, when the card expanded to six races worth $260,000. In a sign of things to come, Jim Casey and John McKee trained multiple winners. Over the years the night has included bands, skydivers, the Budweiser Clydesdales, visits from governors and a purse structure that swelled past $1 million.

Like anything with longevity, the event dealt with loss. Huff was diagnosed with dementia in 2013. He died in 2021. Holden carries the flag for the event now, and worries about other recent losses and their impact.

"We've had so many losses the last few years – Sam, John McKee, Jim Casey, Dennis Bybee," she said, adding important owners/trainers/breeders to the list along with Huff. All three died in 2023. Another major player in the state's Thoroughbred world, Randy Funkhouser, died in 2022. They left voids, but others press on.

"I'm grateful to see it continuing but we're going to be looking at fewer foals – like the rest of the industry," Holden said. "We're going to need to figure out how to work with that."

Looking ahead, she pointed out the success of David Raim and Jeff Runco, Cyndy McKee, Ronney Brown, Tim and Judy Grams, the Casey operation and others.

"It's been a question of keeping it going," Holden said. "Covid messed up a lot of things, too, and in some ways we're still in the process of building back. Thirty-eight years is a long time."

Here's to 38 more. ■

Father's Day

INDIVIDUALITY PUSHES STALLIONS ON MARYLAND MILLION JOURNEY

By Vinnie Perrone

Who are these influential dads who inspire the generations, who get patrons to board chauffeured carriages for brief interludes, who command media attention and sturdy fees for their climactic work?

Dollar signs surround these dads, but what secrets lie within them? In August, *Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred* engaged investigations to expose these truths: Maryland's father of the year doesn't care to see a doctor, even in his dotage. Another notable will only enter a washroom backward. Another trashed his little plaything in a fit of bluster. Another doubles as a garden-hose contortionist. Another likes it dirty, though that's not the reason his kids aren't invited to the big family bash at Laurel Park this month.

These dads – the Thoroughbred stallions who give life to Maryland Million contenders – have classic conformations, prestigious pedigrees, robust resumes and, it turns out, some colorful quirks.

Detective work it wasn't. Their servants, stud farm owners and keepers who provide a pipeline for Maryland-sired racehorses, simply opened their doors. OK, gates.

Along the lanes of five iconic homesteads, each with stories and isms of its own, yesterday echoed, today called, tomorrow whispered. And, with the 39th Maryland Million Day on the horizon at Laurel Park Oct. 12, barnyard talk provided tidbits you won't find in a stallion register.

GREAT NOTION

Northview Stallion Station, Chesapeake City

Anticipation crackled. Northview Stallion Station awaited a new stud in fall 2004, and business manager Linda Bench left her tidy office to greet the hotshot who'd outrun a 44-second half-mile at Saratoga the year before. His father, Elusive Quality, had set a world record sprinting, sired 11 major stakes winners from his debut crop and earned a stud fee nearing $100,000.

"I was very excited by all of his credentials," Bench said.

The van hauling Great Notion from Kentucky turned onto Northern Dancer Drive, slowed to a gentle stop, brought no immediate movement as if to tease the drama. A ramp descended, and off walked . . . Winnie the Pooh's gloomy pal.

"His head was down, and he made me think of Eeyore with his 'Oh, bother' expression," Bench said. "He went into the stall. He looked that way for a few days."

Handlers had seen these torpid types turn the breeding shed aflutter, but not quite the way Great Notion did. On an early date in 2005, he found rapture not in a waiting mare but in a flapping swallow darting through the rafters.

"He drove everybody crazy," Bench said.

Could it be, Great Notion a dud at stud? Word of his shy, distracted ways carried beyond Northview's vast and fabled

Maryland's stallion dean, Great Notion, enjoys some summer turnout under a tree enjoyed by Northern Dancer decades ago.

BARRIE R. REIGHTLER

BARRIE B. REIGHTLER (2)

Francisco Torres says he doesn't have a favorite among the Northview stallions, but his relationship with Great Notion is evident. Left, Hoppertunity looks for his first Maryland Million-eligible 2-year-olds this year.

acreage. So first-year stallion manager Francisco Torres and colleagues concocted a plan to "trick" the newcomer.

They recast the breeding shed as harem, introducing Great Notion to one or more newly bred mares that attracted scant interest. When his scheduled partner for the day emerged, bathed in estrus, Great Notion thrilled to greet her.

Before long, the staff reckoned that Great Notion wasn't flummoxed or lazy or uninterested but wise and efficient.

"They finally came to the conclusion that he was so smart that he wouldn't put himself in a position that was risky," Bench said. "So he prefers the mares that were at their optimal time to be presented to him. Otherwise, he would have preferred to wait."

Once questioned, Great Notion has become The Answer. In 2023, the Maryland Horse Breeders Association voted him the state's top stallion for the eighth consecutive year after he managed personal bests with 77 winners and $5,997,569 in progeny earnings, most by a Maryland sire since Northview's

BARRIE B. REIGHTLER (2)

Irish War Cry frolics in his paddock, once home to Northern Dancer. Torres describes Golden Lad as a good personality.

mighty Not For Love had 86 winners (2012) and $6,117,580 (2009). Great Notion's 5-year-old son, Coastal Mission ($778,653 and counting), emerged as West Virginia-bred Horse of the Year in 2023, daughter Fille d'Espirit ($780,911) Maryland-bred champion the year before.

Buoyed by 4-year-old filly Future Is Now, Grade 2 winner with 2024 earnings of $343,430 into September, Great Notion again led the purse draws of state stallions by plenty.

The sire of the winners of 20 Maryland Million races needs two to tie former County Life Farm standout Allen's Prospect for second all-time. (Frontrunning Not For Love leads with a gaudy 37.)

Torres, promoted to farm manager in 2022, said of Great Notion, "He's been a really good, quiet horse. He's not aggressive. He's playful. When it's rainy or a cold wind, he likes to jump a little bit when you bring him in from the field. But in a good way, not in a mean way."

"Loved his personality from the beginning," Bench said. "I've been his champion the whole time he's been here. Once we got so far in, I didn't have to champion him anymore."

On TV, Bench watches baseball and football and hockey and tennis, sometimes knitting as she goes. On the job, she oversees a power-hitting lineup that rivals Baltimore's Orioles. By mid-September, Northview touted four of the state's five top studs by 2024 earnings and five of the top seven. Torres offered these thumbnails, verbatim, on Great Notion's free-swinging teammates.

No. 3 Golden Lad: "Good personality."

No. 4 Uncle Lino: "Big, tough horse."

No. 5 Hoppertunity: "A gentleman."

No. 7 Irish War Cry: "He is a little bit of a challenge. That horse, since the day he came over, they warned us to be careful with this horse. Don't close your eyes on him."

With his third racing-age crop, Irish War Cry awaits his first Maryland Million winner. Golden Lad has spawned four Million winners and six victories. Uncle Lino and Hoppertunity have their first chances this year with eligible 2-year-olds.

Northview stands an exception to a sweeping bloodstock consolidation that reduced the nation's 4,041 stallions in 2003 to 1,013 in 2023; the farm stood 11 of Maryland's 24 studs this year. No, Bench said, they don't run an office pool predicting house-sired Million Day winners, "but that would be fun."

Established by Richard Golden and partners in 1989, Northview tapped a wellspring that keeps gushing. Acreage then encompassed a small piece of legendary Windfields Farm, named by Canadian E.P. Taylor for his first stakes winner. Two years later, Northview's expansion to 189 acres included the barns and paddocks that had comprised the illustrious Windfields stallion division Northern Dancer anointed.

A stocky little Canadian-bred who couldn't fetch a $25,000 auction reserve as a yearling, Northern Dancer made the 1964 Kentucky Derby and Preakness Stakes his early steps toward scaling Everest. By 1981, at age 20, he stood the world's prize stallion; Taylor, hell-bent to keep Northern Dancer at Windfields, rejected a $40-million offer from European interests. Shareholders arranged a $1 million stud fee for private bookings. Nearly 40 years later, 2023, his presence

> "A lot of people judged the book for the first page. You have to read it before you say something."
>
> *– Northview Stallion Station's Francisco Torres, on the first impressions of Great Notion*

so vivified international bloodlines that United States classic winners Mage, National Treasure and Arcangelo and 15 major European winners had Northern Dancer on at least one side of their pedigrees.

Great Notion has Northern Dancer's stall in one of two spacious stud barns marked by burnished wood, white cinder block and evident character. Northern Dancer originally had the opposite stall, Bench said, but got transferred for safety's sake. "In those days, we had high windows . . . and he would stand up to look out the window when the [mare-shuttling] vans came in."

She went on. "His fame was one thing, but his personality was charming. . . . He knew he was a star. Every time he came out of the stall, he'd turn it on. It was incredible to watch."

By sight or by word, Linda Bench compiled a desk drawer of anecdotes. She moved to Windfields as a kid after her dad, Benny Miller, became stallion and breeding manager, started office work there in 1978. "I sat at my father's dinner table my whole life," she said. "That's my degree." She also met stallion man Joe Bench at Northview, married him, had children. By the time Linda's grandchildren arrived, veterinarian Michael Golden and sister Lisa Hofstetter had assumed farm ownership following the death of their father.

Even in the August swelter, the walk from farm office to stud barn got waylaid for all the essence underfoot. There, unfenced in the grass, headstones mark the burial plots of Northview/Windfields stallions Polish Numbers, Tentam, King's Bishop, Caveat, T. V. Commercial, Baederwood.

At age 24, Great Notion covered 34 mares this year, Bench said, and got all but two in foal. Time has started to revise his anatomy, and sore hocks require attention and limit breedings, but farm manager Torres otherwise sees no budding signs of decline. Sometimes, he said, they give you no signs at all. Not For Love, in his mid-20s, covered two mares to start the season before desire's flame suddenly extinguished.

Torres mused: If only they could all channel Two Punch, who had 13 Maryland Million wins and ruled the breeding shed at age 28. "His libido was really high. That horse, he was made for breeding. In his late 20s, he was breeding better than any young horse. He would do the job. Never make you wait. All business."

In his golden years, Great Notion only makes the veterinarian wait. The approaching visitor brings the stallion a wary eye, a rise in pulse, a sure retreat. "He doesn't like shots too much," Torres said, but seems to comprehend the benefits.

Like all Northview studs, Bench said, Great Notion's 2025 business plan and stud fee (a farm-leading $7,500 this year) would be reevaluated after the Maryland Million. His caretakers deemed him up to the task as September neared, but Bench acknowledged, "We just sort of feel like every year we hold our breath."

Linda Bench loves a good story; for years, she's read a novel and a work of nonfiction simultaneously. Francisco Torres, in his 26th year reading Northview's horses, put a metaphor to the farm's misconstrued kingpin.

"A lot of people judged the book for the first page," he said. "You have to read it before you say something."

BLOFELD

Murmur Farm, Darlington

He came from the southland
all freckled and fair
Unseasoned, unproven
no goods to declare
Armed only with papers
and obvious charm
He spoke without speaking
and woke up a farm

Louis Quatorze had died. Three other stallions were old or fading, another untested. In the summer of 2017, Audrey Murray hunted a new stud prospect, which promised a four-year journey to the unknown. But she had to look ahead; age-wise, she had barely passed 80.

Audrey phoned her son Kent, a Maryland horse industry exec and program manager for aerospace-defense giant Northrop Grumman. "Do you want to go down to Kentucky?"

"When?"

GEORGE ADAMS

Jose Macias Jr. leads Blofeld, fast becoming a stallion star, from his paddock at Murmur Farm.

"Tomorrow."

Kent knew his mother meant business; she wouldn't tout such a trip on a whim. They flew back the same day.

That July, Blofeld arrived on the hilly, 131-acre spread a racy, brown-speckled gray with length, a strong shoulder and genial disposition. Had he not found the white-fenced splendor of Murmur Farm, Audrey said, "I would not be in business, I don't think."

For more than a year she had tracked him, taken first by his pedigree. Blofeld's father, Quality Road, won the Florida Derby-G1 in track record time and set Saratoga's existing 6½-furlong dirt record (1:13.74) at 3, and won three Grade 1s at 4, one a track record. His dam, the Storm Cat-sired stakes winner Storm Minstrel, had distinguished herself as an upstart broodmare. Esteemed Virginia horseman Ned Evans bred and raced Blofeld's parents before his death in 2010.

The Thoroughbred stallion owner works as farmer, entrepreneur, preservationist, salesperson, matchmaker, gambler, opportunist, visionary. And, sometimes, spy.

"I was following [Blofeld] racing," Audrey said. "And then he won that Gulfstream Park Handicap, and I thought, 'There's no way I'm going to get him.' "

She waited. Over 15 months, Blofeld made seven winless starts after that Grade 2 Florida sparkler. As the heat intensified, perceptions cooled toward Blofeld. Not Audrey's. In her mind his price, not his pedigree, had declined.

From the first crop of Quality Road to race and serve at stud, Blofeld bred 35 mares his rookie season. Audrey said she worked hard to make that book given the unknowns. Meantime, the pressure on Blofeld and the farm intensified: Petionville, then Murmur's No. 2 stallion at age 26, covered only seven mares.

"He'll pull you all over the place. But, to me, that's normal. He's a kind horse. Always been good to handle, a good horse to breed."

– Murmur Farm's Jose Macias Jr., about Blofeld

Testosterone-raging studs stay in separate paddocks for a reason; they'll fight to the death to prove their dominance. They can also ambush and bloody and menace handlers. After Halo left Windfields Farm for Kentucky stud duty in the 1980s, his new stable hands laughed off the suggested need for two handlers and a muzzle, a dismissal revised after Halo grabbed a groom by the midsection, hoisted and tossed him about like a rag doll. They say stallions stamp offspring? Halo's son, Southern Halo, won the nickname Hannibal Lecter.

Not so at Murmur, the story goes. In Petionville's sunset years as a stallion, farm manager Jose Macias Jr. said, he welcomed Blofeld, evoked an older brother and got friendship in return.

"Sometimes studs don't become friends," Macias said. "Petionville used to go out in the front field, where the [stud] barn is, and Blofeld goes inside; he had a visitor that day. And Petionville was outside, screaming, 'Where's my friend? Where's Blofeld?' I thought that was funny, because once I got [Blofeld] back out, Petionville got quiet."

Petionville acted not out of jealousy, Macias said, but loneliness.

Blofeld found steady breeding-shed company from there, following his debut book with 33, 28 and 27. By 2021, his first 2-year-olds had hit the track with bright results that turned blinding. The following spring, 14 Blofeld offspring had raced. All had won.

Suddenly, Audrey started hearing from broodmare owners newly enthralled with the gray sensation. Before the 2022 breeding season had ended, Blofeld addressed a Maryland-best 86 mares. That fall, Johnyz From Albany and Chickieness won both Maryland Million juvenile races. Miss Harriett took the 2023 Lassie (in her debut) and, by late summer 2024, had sprinted to two more stakes victories.

"We had mares we'd turned out and stopped breeding because they didn't have any great offspring," Kent said. "Brought 'em off the hill, bred 'em [to Blofeld] and got good horses."

Audrey smiled at the turnabout and all that preceded it, clasped her hands and asked, "What DO people do for excitement that don't have racehorses?"

With late husband Allen, then on her own, Audrey fused impeccable timing into punchlines and bloodlines. As the 20th century ebbed, they used the gains from Norquestor's eight-year stud career to build a new stud barn, took the six-fold haul from the sale of stallion Deerhound to build a magnificent house addition rich in style and racing mementoes. Opening acts, it turned out, to the breathtaking main event.

In the fall of 2001, Allen and Audrey spent $150,000 on an out-of-favor Kentucky stallion by Mr. Prospector from undefeated Hall of Famer Personal Ensign. As Our Emblem started stud duty at Murmur the following year, two sons from his second crop made headlines: New York-bred Private Emblem won the Grade 2 Arkansas Derby. Kentucky-bred War Emblem won the Illinois Derby-G2, then the Kentucky Derby-G1, then the Preakness-G1. Bloodstock interest raging before the 2002 Belmont Stakes-G1, the Murrays arranged a silent auction that coaxed a winning bid of $10.1 million. The stud they'd owned less than a year largely fizzled post-sale.

Audrey waited two decades for Blofeld to perform the next magic act. Even as the number of Thoroughbred mares bred nationally fell by half post-2008, Blofeld, with a $5,000 stud fee, managed to get 76 mares in foal this year, Audrey said. Here, she embellished: "We were breeding three times a day. The stud would look at [Jose] going into the breeding shed the third time and say, 'Are you kidding me?' But he got the job done."

Macias relished the recollection. "He gets excited; he'll pull you all over the place. But, to me, that's normal. He's a kind horse. Always been good to handle, a good horse to breed.

ELLEN B. PONS

Jerry Zavala leads Friesan Fire in from his paddock at Country Life Farm.

"I can trust him. When I'm under his legs, when I bathe him and scrub his legs, I can do that" without worry. "I love him. I love to work with him."

In his 25 years at Murmur, Macias said, he's seen horses do strange things. But he could summon only a single idiosyncrasy for Blofeld – the gray's unwillingness to walk straight into a wash stall. Macias said he has to turn the horse around and back him in. "But once he's in there, he's fine," walks forward to exit and enters his barn stall conventionally.

As Murmur's only stallion, Blofeld had the stud barn to himself as September unfolded. But for how long? Might Audrey ponder an acquisition?

"Funny you should ask," Kent said.

"We're writing up something now," Audrey added, meaning a proposal. As for details, Kent would only say the stallion prospect stood his first season this year.

Why wouldn't Audrey Murray look ahead? Age-wise, she hasn't even reached 90.

FRIESAN FIRE

Country Life Farm, Bel Air

Christy Holden presented the case with lawyerly flair.

The facts will show Mosler and Divining Rod in a battle for supremacy at Maryland's oldest Thoroughbred nursery. Each stands among Maryland's top 10 by progeny prize money. Each sired a Maryland Million winner last year. One or the other has led the farm in mares bred each of the past six years, including 2024.

The evidence, she implied, and eyewitness accounts will prove beyond a reasonable doubt that both take their orders from Country Life's other stud, the one known as Fire. Friesan Fire.

"He's the alpha here," said Holden, Country Life's general manager. "If they were runnin' wild, he'd be the king. He's definitely number one, thinks he's number one and wants to be number one."

ELLEN B. PONS (2)

Divining Rod gets a good curry from Jerry Zavala while Mosler munches grass in his paddock.

Exhibit A: From the shadowy stud barn, stallion manager Jerry Zavala led Friesan Fire onto the blacktop. Wide-eyed, invigorated, eager to breed even in the summery offseason.

"You can see he's ready to go all the time," Holden said.

A king of the hill mentality, farm co-owner Mike Pons furthered, "whether he gets the most mares or not."

Zavala made a couple of loops. Friesan Fire clopped the pavement, looking for a date.

Holden supplied the backstory. "We call him The Viper when he comes into the breeding shed because he actually lays his ears back flat, and he sticks his head out, and his neck is, like, snaked out" to ward off potential competitors. "It is the meanest look you'll see. It's a unique thing to watch him come into the breeding shed. But the minute he gets in there and sees it's just the mare, his ears are up and he's ready to go."

For the record, she noted, Friesan Fire becomes The Viper only when Divining Rod and Mosler occupy their separate paddocks. If they're inside the stallion barn, Friesan Fire portrays himself.

Not that he hasn't cause to swagger. He's descended from racing champion and foundation sire A.P. Indy and Australian Group 1-winning mare Bollinger (a daughter of Dehere). As a racehorse, Friesan Fire consumed Fair Grounds' three Triple Crown preps in 2009 and seven weeks later set out the 7-2 favorite in the Kentucky Derby, undone by a wretched trip. As a stallion, he sired Army Mule, runaway winner of the Grade 1 Carter Handicap, and Pennsylvania-bred Call Paul, winner of the Grade 2 Saratoga Special in his second start.

Zavala returned Friesan Fire to his stall at the barn's far end and brought out Mosler. The burly chocolate bay known as Mose passes his valentine to "90 percent" of his get, Holden said, the white forehead marking unmistakably shaped like a heart.

The question carried: Does he do anything unpredictable? Before Holden could answer, Mosler buck-kicked the air, then proceeded in orderly fashion.

At 13, he still has the physical virtue that defines his family. By War Front from the Arch mare Gold Vault, Mosler sold for $1.05 million as a yearling; full-brother Air Vice Marshal won a $2.2 million auction bid two years later. Half-sister Contested (by Ghostzapper) sold for $2.3 million as a 3-year-old after winning two Grade 1s for trainer Bob Baffert.

For the second half of the year, no mares to breed, Mosler tends to gain weight more readily than his barn-mates, Holden said, grain servings rationed to a handful or two a day. She warmly called him "a chunka-munka."

Then, "Friesan's really the character of the barn. In fact, if we stood here a little while longer, he'd probably start squealin' and kickin' down there, just wonderin' why we're here and we haven't gotten him back out again."

A short time later, Exhibit B emerged. Friesan Fire, out of view, peppered the air with sporadic rantings.

Zavala leading, out walked Divining Rod with a white face, two socks and an air of grandness. His dam, mega-earner Precious Kitten, stood a half-sister to national turf champion and sire extraordinaire Kitten's Joy. Roy and Gretchen Jackson of Barbaro fame bred and raced Divining Rod, and trainer Arnaud Delacour likened the graded stakes winner to his vaunted sire, Tapit.

"Butch Cassidy and Sundance," Mike Pons dubbed Divining Rod and Mosler. "And Lurch in a knife fight."

Friesan Fire again the topic, Holden described the nasty way he treats his Jolly Ball horse toy, saying, "He bites it and he throws it in his stall and he steps on it."

Exhibit C: A subsequent tour of Friesan Fire's stall revealed the blue victim tormented, flattened and ignored in the far-right corner.

Holden pointed to the stall across the way. He had resided there, but his knack for rearing, clenching a crossbeam with his teeth and announcing his superiority to the horse next door got him moved. No crossbeam in his present digs. No next-door neighbor, either.

It isn't all bluster. Friesan Fire has sired three Million winners, Mosler has three wins, Divining Rod one, for a farm that once stood Allen's Prospect, second all-time with 22, and Malibu Moon, who provided Eclipse Award-winning 2-year-old Declan's Moon in his second crop. Malibu Moon soon moved to Kentucky, Country Life retaining part ownership, and fathered 2013 Kentucky Derby hero Orb and more than 100 other stakes winners.

Even before French immigrant Adolphe Pons purchased Rockland Farm in 1933 and renamed it Country Life, he was mingling with racing's bluebloods. Adolphe had served as personal secretary to banker and Thoroughbred breeding pioneer August Belmont II, who, bum leg and all, enlisted in World War I at age 64. Belmont thus instructed the sale of all his 1917 foals; Adolphe complied, and Samuel Riddle bought a yearling named Man o' War for $5,000.

In 1946, Country Life foaled Raise You and sold her as a yearling. Bred to gray marvel Native Dancer in 1960, Raise You produced Raise a Native, who in turn sired Alydar, Mr. Prospector and Majestic Prince.

Adolphe Pons had died by then, succeeded by sons Joe and John, who kept the 113-acre family farm in the public eye. Carry Back, a high-strung son of County Life stallion Saggy, won the Derby and Preakness of 1961, his Triple Crown bid dashed by 65-1 startler Sherluck, son of Country Life stallion Correspondent.

Correspondent. In a forgotten basement storeroom in his ancestral home, third-generation horseman and two-time Eclipse Award-winning journalist Josh Pons uncovered boxes of letters Adolphe had written and received (along with photos and negatives of Man o' War as a halter-less foal). Josh culled and collated the trove and, this summer, published the book *Letters from Country Life*, a rich tribute to his granddad.

From 2002 to 2022, the North American foal population fell 48 percent to an estimated 18,700; Maryland's fell 42 percent to 575. Adolphe Pons had shepherded County Life through the Great Depression, gambling prohibitions, World War II; sons Joe and John, the oil embargo of the 1970s and recession a decade later; grandsons Josh and Mike, the 2008 financial crisis and Covid-19.

> "If we stood here a little while longer, he'd probably start squealin' and kickin' down there, just wonderin' why we're here and we haven't gotten him back out again."
>
> *– Country Life Farm's Christy Holden, about the demanding Friesan Fire*

For the Thoroughbred stallion owner, headwinds gust uneven and perpetual. Across the years, Adolphe wrote, "The breeding industry is practically dead . . . The yearling situation is really serious, and I doubt they will bring much this year . . . Large stud fees are a thing of the past . . . The labor situation is so bad that I have not been able to leave to come up to the races . . . "

As Josh wrote in his book, "History connects everything."

In 1957, hot-tempered Country Life stallion Lochinvar knocked down Joe Pons, father of Josh and Mike, pinned him and savaged his hands. For all his bravado, Friesan Fire reportedly hadn't maimed a soul.

But stud men like Jerry Zavala stay wise to the possibilities. After the Country Life stallions had been introduced and retired, one seemed jumpy. On a final pass outside the barn, stall bars clanged and a single horse nickered, the evidence deemed circumstantial.

HOLY BOSS

Anchor and Hope Farm, Port Deposit

If they sought a fuller website description of their business, Louis and Grace Merryman could advertise Anchor and Hope Farm as "a full-service Thoroughbred operation offering boarding, foaling, layups, sales prep . . . and regular performances by Holy Boss."

It wouldn't take much. Grace has all the photos: Here's Holy Boss wearing a garden hose like a bandolier. Here's Holy

COURTESY OF ANCHOR & HOPE FARM

Holy Boss goofs around with the remnants of a Jolly Ball. The geese at Anchor and Hope Farm are unimpressed.

Boss twirling a twig overhead like a majorette and dropkicking it on the way down. Here's Holy Boss dragging his Jolly Ball atop the fence, then letting it fly. Here's Holy Boss razzing the poor stud in the adjacent paddock. Here's Holy Boss shadow-dancing Pearl the farm dog along the fence line. Here's Holy Boss going down to snuggle the cats.

Stallions stamp their young in different ways. "He's a ham, and his kids are hams," Grace said. "They're all like that."

"Boss is quite the character," farm assistant Kim Myers offered, killing the engine to a utility hauler. "He likes to toss the Jolly Ball out of his paddock and see how many times I will throw it back in there for him. He'll just entertain himself, and sometimes visitors."

When he isn't clowning, Holy Boss works as one of two active farm stallions. The other, Bourbon Courage, has outdone Holy Boss with one Maryland Million winner but not with comedic talent. "Bourbon is far too serious and refined for that kind of nonsense," Grace said.

Five years since fire devoured their main barn, the Merrymans have rebuilt and, in a family sense anyway, expanded. On a 2022 Christmas visit with family in New England, Grace, six months pregnant, went into labor unexpectedly. Max Merryman arrived weighing 27 ounces. His future at best uncertain, he spent four months in a Boston hospital and left there 7 pounds 10 ounces and healthy.

As August closed, Grace carried Max The Comeback Kid about the comeback barn where Holy Boss and Bourbon Courage snacked and lounged. Grace lowered Max, who scuttled about in rubber boots, bent on adventure.

"When I'm not looking," she said, pulling her cellphone from a back jeans pocket, "he likes to get into the lime bucket."

Grace displayed a photo of Holy Boss and her toddler son, saying, "He loves to nuzzle Max."

All of the horse's histrionics, she said, can't camouflage his truth. "He's a sweetheart. He's incredibly kind."

A creature with compassion. A matinee idol with a gift for schtick. A short-distance runner in a long-distance frame. Holy Boss won Saratoga's Grade 2 Amsterdam and sprinted about other tracks not all coiled and bunchy but rangy and

elegant. The son of Street Boss, from the Holy Bull mare Holy Grace, earned $771,527 in 22 starts and sired Maryland-bred filly champion Bosserati and a half-dozen other six-figure earners in 2023.

He engaged 16 mares this year, Grace said, Bourbon Courage 25. The farm's third stud, Long River, received no solicitations in 2024 and might well find a new home. His first-crop runners sold better than they ran; even a $1,500 stud fee couldn't persuade shoppers this year.

It had seemed so promising. An A.P. Indy-sired Darley homebred out of Breeders' Cup Distaff-G1 winner Round Pond, Long River had won on two continents and earned close to $800,000. For all her affability, Grace didn't dodge the gut-shot.

"You want to talk about a surprising stallion flop," she said before reeling off his bona-fides and addressing the economic uncertainty all stud-farm owners face.

"We came here to stand stallions, and we think, on a mom-and-pop operation, we've done a pretty good job of that," she said. "But it's kind of come to a plateau where you need to be realistic about what you put into it versus what is coming back."

Sure, the state has pledged $400 million to wreck and rebuild Pimlico as a modern-day showplace, but, even if it happens, work would run to 2028. "You still have four-plus years until you have any idea if your daily expenses, advertising, upkeep is worth it. How are we supposed to bridge that gap? It's a great hypothetical. It's still a hypothetical."

Even in dicey times, Grace said, the bid to improve the breed fulfills and sustains. "If you look at what has happened to a shrinking industry – nationally, not just in Maryland – it's still a story worth telling. Like, we've all banded together in good faith and brought these stallions here that proved out to be worth it. And they're individuals. It would be miserable if we didn't enjoy them."

So they'll retrench and recalibrate and wait to reload. The Merrymans' hefty broodmare band of 2019, pre-Covid, stands at eight; next year, probably four. Holy Boss, who spent his early stud years shuttling to South America, might resume traveling.

"When he comes back from Argentina in the winter, he's in his bathing suit, not his winter parka," Grace said. "Trying to put a blanket on him when it's zero-plus [degrees], it doesn't last. It's shredded out in his field."

Holy Boss clearly has a different way of going. He can't wear a halter outside either, Grace said, " 'cause it'll be on the highway."

LYDIA A. WILLIAMS

Bourbon Courage keeps an eye on the farm action.

Here Grace replayed Holy Boss' greatest hits:

"He dragged a hose into his field and got it around his neck and over his head and was running around like that, and every time someone went in to try to get it before he hogtied himself and slid down the hill, he would just run away like a puppy with a stolen sock.

"If he's thrown his Jolly Balls out of his paddock, and he's desperate, he'll pull up big weeds or twigs and twirl 'em over his head. Anything he can have in his mouth, he will get to rearing and prancing and carrying on and having just a great time. He throws it over his head and tries to kick it on the way by. He's really funny.

"He loves little critters. If the cats are around, he tries to go down and snuggle 'em."

Such antics distinguish him from Bourbon Courage (Lion Heart—Shine Forth, by Carson City), the stud Grace calls "steady Eddie." A stripe-faced bay who found constant trouble as a runner and still cleared $1 million, Bourbon Courage sired graded stakes winner Double Crown, Maryland Million Sprint winner Fortheluvofbourbon (during a six-straight win tear), graded stakes-placed Raging Whiskey and 2019 Maryland Million Juvenile runner-up Stone Courageous from his first crop. Double Crown, 55 starts in and still racing at 7,

"Pity the fool who has to bring him in. It's bad. He stands at his gate and screams until someone goes to get him."

– Anchor and Hope Farm's Grace Merryman, about leaving Bourbon Courage out in the rain

has drawn checks in two Maryland Million Classics and one Sprint without winning.

According to Grace, Bourbon Courage's runners have "his heart, his grit, his determination." She said nothing about their ability to tolerate inclement weather.

"If you leave Bourbon out in the rain, pity the fool who has to bring him in. It's bad. He stands at his gate and screams until someone goes to get him. He's set in his ways, the older he gets. He's just a titch grumpy."

What horse would look cheery next to Holy Boss? Grace answered by mentioning a visit the day before.

Heather Cellinesi, the Merrymans' former barn manager, had stopped by the farm with young daughter Micaela. Cellinesi had a starring role in the Anchor and Hope story: Alone on the farm in August 2019, she dashed into a barn aflame, freeing Bourbon Courage and Imagining (Holy Boss and Long River were in South America) and foals, yearlings, mares. The fire turned the barn to ash but claimed no victims.

Grace spoke of the glad reunion – she, Heather, Micaela and Holy Boss relishing the moment.

"Heather is my dear friend," Grace said, "and Boss got really excited to see the little girl."

Three years after the fire, Imagining died of colic at 14. "I know Boss misses him," Grace said. "In turnout, Boss was across the way from Imagining, and Imagining would get so mad. And Boss would be throwing that Jolly Ball at him, and Imagining would be charging the fence, and Boss would just prance away, like, gotcha!"

Grace's husband, Louis, unable to make the interview, stands the third generation of Merrymans to operate Anchor and Hope following grandfather John and father Edwin (trainers Katy Voss, Ann Merryman and Lizzie Merryman are Edwin's sisters; Louis' mother, Sass Small Merryman, is the sister of deeply rooted Maryland horsemen Dickie and Doug Small). Grace, an equestrian from Cape Cod, met Louis in the foaling barn at Mark Reid's Walnut Green in Pennsylvania, married him in 2016 and moved to Anchor and Hope a year later.

For their first five years, Louis and Grace did most everything on the farm's 50 acres. Then Max became Grace's full-time job.

"I don't know if I can muck a stall or move a tractor," she said, but the candids of a certain chestnut "goofball" prove she can still take rare photos.

CUPID

Atlanta Hall Farm, Monkton

So this horse walks into a dinner party . . .

What sounds like the lead-in to a joke is Garrett Murray telling a stallion tale from his time in South America. Then a manager for Kentucky-based Coolmore America's Ashford Stud, Murray had gone to Argentina to oversee breeding seasons for Honour and Glory, Hennessy and Thunder Gulch.

The setup: "Hennessy was a tricky breeder," Murray began, Ireland alive in his phrasing. "He would take a long time to get the job done. It was a chore, just a game. And we had to do things to make it work."

The payoff: The day's business done, stablehands would set up tables outside the stud barn for evening cookouts. "Thunder Gulch was incredible," Murray said, "the neatest little horse. They'd have this Spanish music going, and he would come around and eat cupcakes off the table. He was just a legend."

The postscript: "That's where these horses can bring you."

Not to a barbecue, he appended, but to a spiritual coexistence that might inspire such a docile stallion. In 2023, Murray accepted Cupid as the first stud at historic Atlanta Hall with an immediate priority: "I just wanted to do things to make him happy."

An early discovery: Getting dirty and staying dirty makes Cupid happy.

"I didn't wash him for ya," Murray said.

As the 2024 breeding season approached, broodmare owners saw mostly shiny features in the light gray stud. A $900,000 yearling, Cupid raced as a Grade 1-winning son of Tapit, stood six seasons in Kentucky and sired Grade 1 turf dynamo Carson's Run, a 3-year-old with $1.3 million earned from eight starts. Cupid covered 53 mares at Atlanta Hall

BARRIE B. REIGHTLER

Cupid checks Genevieve Murray for carrots at Atlanta Hall Farm. His first Maryland Million-eligible foals arrive next year.

this year, Murray said, making him one of Maryland's busier stallions, got about 45 in foal. His advertised stud fee: $8,000.

Cupid's first foals as a Maryland sire will arrive next year, making them eligible for the 2027 Million.

"Did I ever think I'd have him here? No," said Murray, known informally as Gary. "But when the phone rang last fall . . . "

Bloodstock broker Jamie LaMonica had arranged it. Owner Tony Mills of Sugar Mill Stables spoke his wish to move Cupid out of Kentucky. Mills considered New York and California as destinations, Murray said, and 350-acre Atlanta Hall for its scope and substance.

The deal effectuated, Murray drove to Kentucky to fetch the stud but returned with an empty trailer. A fever and infection had landed Cupid at Rood and Riddle Equine Hospital in Lexington, then to an isolation barn, then back to Ashford for two weeks. Murray eventually brought him home Oct. 1, 2023.

He praised Mills, saying, "He could have kept him in Kentucky. He lives in Kentucky. He could have put him in Darby Dan and said, 'Do your best, boys,' and he'd have got his 40, 50 mares. But he took a punt on us. And here we are."

In a sense, Murray's daughter Genevieve, 13 and nicknamed Gee, had seen what her father overlooked. Two years earlier, Murray had taken Gee and a friend to Ashford to get a close look at Triple Crown winners American Pharoah and Justify.

"A beautiful woodchip track at Ashford where all the stallions go out, offseason," Murray said, "then a magnificent parade when they come back in at 10:30 or 11. You stand there and go, 'Wow, wow, wow."

Justify left him spellbound. "Cupid went by me that day; I never even paid attention to him. Not that I didn't like him; he wasn't on my radar. I got distracted by who was behind him."

Consumed by the cavalcade, Murray lost track of Gee, found her and her friend by a wash stall where a gray-white horse was getting bathed. Cupid.

As Murray finished the story, Cupid stood beside him on a lead shank, grazing in the Atlanta Hall courtyard. Murray

patted the 11-year-old on the withers, puffs of brown rising in the August air. Cupid had splotches of dirt on his stifle, flank and shoulder too.

Murray flashed a knowing smile. "He's a happy horse when he's a muddy horse. Less is more." Then, to a curious expression, he said that Cupid gets a bath and "a good shampoo" weekly.

Whether the outgrowth of a Zen approach or a placid environment away from the "razzmatazz" of Ashford, Cupid grazed contentedly – mannerly – gently tugging bite-sized tufts, eating slowly, savoring the taste of the day.

"I promise you," Murray said, "I could probably drop this shank."

The shank bore no precautionary chain over Cupid's nose. "I don't believe in all that," Murray said. "Yes, a chain when he's bred, but not in a situation like this. He's a big horse, sure, big and powerful, but there's no badness in him."

That hadn't been the expectation. "Bit of a hothead," the Kentucky lads warned. "Be careful. Two-man stallion."

"I totally respect their judgment and opinion," Murray said, "but everybody can handle him. He's not a two-man stallion. He's a big baby. Does he nip, does he bite, has he gotten me? No. Has he tried? Yeah. That's what he's supposed to do."

Before Cupid had seen his first mare in Maryland, Murray tapped into his aura and departed from the Kentucky breeding schedule. At Atlanta Hall, Cupid headed out to his field at first light and returned to breed mid-morning. "A piece of cake," Murray said, until the owner of the last mare he bred asked for a 6 a.m. cover to foster an early return to Virginia. Cupid went directly from his stall to the breeding shed "a lunatic. Like, difficult. That last mare covered this season taught me so much. Even though we've done a season, we're still learnin'."

From Ireland to Kentucky to Argentina to Kentucky to Maryland, Murray met Elizabeth Voss, married her in 2010 and took residence at stately, panoramic Atlanta Hall, where Vosses have lived, hunted and fortified the horse-centered land and culture since 1936. Elizabeth's great-grandparents, Edward and Elsa, made a living as artists – he a painter, she a sculptor – and Edward served as Master of the Elkridge-Harford Hounds for more than three decades. Atlanta Hall still hosts the Elkridge-Harford Point-to-Point, the springtime event locals call The Voss Races.

Elizabeth's formidable father, Tom Voss, fox-hunted, rode timber races, trained titans of the steeplechase and flat and won election to the racing Hall of Fame in 2017, three years after his unexpected death at 63.

Garrett Murray has trained jumpers himself, but Cupid compels him now. The robust addition has dressed Atlanta Hall in new threads as a stallion center, Murray doing what he can to tailor Cupid's wants.

Let's not make the horses conform to our needs, Murray said; let's conform to theirs. Which explains the mandate Murray has given his crew: Cupid's fancy requires a stocked bag of carrots hung by his stall door without exception.

Cupid back in his stall grass-fed and compliant, Murray pulled out two carrots, handed one to Genevieve, held up the other for emphasis. "With this," he said, "he'll follow you to the end of the world."

Cupid's new world at Atlanta Hall has dawned bright and sunny. In year one, he's surged to second among state sires behind only Great Notion, the persistent 24-year-old in position for his ninth consecutive Maryland stallion of the year title.

"The phone is ringing," Murray said of the percolating interest. Even Australians have tweeted inquiries.

On Aug. 7, Sterling Silver (from the Distorted Humor mare Sheet Humor) won Saratoga's Johnstone Mile Handicap, geared down, by 9¾ lengths, on the dirt. Four days later, Carson's Run (out of Hot N Hectic, by Henny Hughes) won a 1⅜6-mile turf stakes there, the Grade 1 Saratoga Derby Invitational, then finished a roaring second in the rich Nashville Derby Invitational-G3, 1⅜6 grassy miles at Kentucky Downs. "That's versatility," Murray said. "That's what this guy has."

And what Murray wants in their relationship. So he follows his instincts with Cupid, pays attention, abandons orthodoxy.

"Argentina taught me so much," he said. Hennessy was a distracted breeder until handlers got him out of the barn and brought the mares to his paddock. The upshot: "It changed his world."

Detours offer new vistas, Murray noted. The tangible results have Cupid on the right road. The mystical bonds and spiritual renewal, still advancing, take him closer to Thunder Gulch every day.

"Am I going to bring him to a cocktail party?" Murray asked of Cupid. "Maybe not. But I'm not saying I never would." ■

Bouncing Back

OWENS BARN SHINES DESPITE TRANSFER OF LITTLE NI

By Paul Halloran ■ *Photographs by Equi-Photo, Inc.*

The horse racing gods taketh away, the horse racing gods giveth.

Monmouth Park-based trainer Eddie Owens Jr. had a potential star on his hands with Little Ni, a speedy sprinter who won his first three starts by a combined 17 lengths heading into the Jersey Shore Stakes, where he took on Book'em Danno, off a win in the Grade 1 Woody Stephens at Saratoga on Belmont Stakes Day. Little Ni came within a head bob of pulling off a major upset.

After that race, an ownership share in Little Ni was sold and the horse was transferred to Mark Casse, who sent him out for the first time in the H. Allen Jerkens at Saratoga Aug. 24. Little Ni was never a factor, finishing last (Book'em Danno was third).

"It was a little disappointing, but I know that's part of the game," said Owens. "There's nothing I can do. They sold half and wanted to be with their trainer. You've got to respect that."

Horse racing is very much a turn-the-page business and Owens did that and then some the day after the Jerkens, on New Jersey-bred day at Monmouth. The former longtime Joe Orseno assistant, who took over in 2020 for the legendary John Mazza, Holly Crest Farms' private trainer for almost 60 years, won three races on the card, including both stakes.

"Everyone with a Jersey-bred looks forward to that day," Owens said.

Two of Owens' winners were among the five progeny of Sea Wizard, the top-ranked New Jersey sire in 2023 and '24, to visit the winner's circle, a banner day for the stallion, who stands at Pegasus Stud, formerly Colonial Farms.

Rock the Rainbow got Owens started in a big way, winning a 2-year-old filly maiden special weight by 18 lengths in her debut. By Sea Wizard out of the Flatter mare Holy Rainbow, Rock the Rainbow is a Roron Stables homebred.

"I knew she was going to run good, I didn't know she was going to do that," Owens said. "She's going to be a nice filly."

Breaking from the rail, never ideal for a first-time starter, Rock the Rainbow was hard ridden by Samuel Marin to get to the lead, opening 2 lengths early in the race. Marin was already looking around for threats as he extended the lead on the turn and there were none. The lead was 10 lengths by the stretch call and it grew from there, as Rock the Rainbow covered the 5½ furlongs in 1:05.57.

"I don't know how good she is. To go 5½ and win by 18, she wasn't asked to do anything other than come out of the gate," said Owens, who said the filly would not run again until late in the year or next year. "I'm not going to rush her."

Owens didn't want to run Riding Pretty in the Eleven North Handicap, the Holly Crest Farms homebred not having sprinted on dirt since her career debut in June 2022 at Gulfstream Park. But the combination of some friendly persuasion by the racing office and there not being a route on dirt for fillies that day prompted him to take a shot.

Good decision, but she had to earn it.

The 4-year-old daughter of Jack Milton out of Girolamo mare High Renaissance was fifth of seven after a quarter-mile, but Jairo Rendon followed instructions and made an early, emphatic move on the turn, drawing even with Bel Pensiero before they straightened for home. The pair dueled for the length of the stretch, Bel Pensiero regaining the lead at the eighth pole before Riding Pretty wore her down to win by a length going 6 furlongs.

"I thought he needed to hook that filly by the top of the stretch," Owens said. "If he didn't, I don't think we were

going by her. I didn't want to have to make up 5 lengths in the stretch."

Once he decided to enter the sprint, Owens gave Riding Pretty a 3-furlong blowout three days before the race "to get some speed in her," he said. "Sprinting is not her game."

It was the fifth win in 20 starts for Riding Pretty, who increased her career earnings to $369,365.

Owens had two Holly Crest homebreds, both by Sea Wizard, in the Charles Hesse III Handicap: Sea Streak, coming off a fifth in the Grade 1 Haskell, and Great Navigator, stakes-placed in open company in 2022 and 2023 and defending Hesse champ. Sea Streak was on the Kentucky Derby-G1 trail early in the year, before running seventh in the Holy Bull Stakes-G3 at Gulfstream. He won the Long Branch and was fifth in the Pegasus at Monmouth before the Haskell, while Great Navigator had lost three in a row after winning a Gulfstream allowance in March.

Sea Streak was fourth after a quarter-mile of the 1 1/16-mile stakes, and still sitting behind a line of three horses heading into the far turn. Rendon made a wide move, took the lead in upper stretch, put away No Cents at the eighth pole and

Trainer Eddie Owens won three races on the Monmouth Park card Aug. 25. Rock the Rainbow (top) started the triple by galloping home by 18 lengths in her debut.

Sea Streak (left) won the Charles Hesse Handicap while Riding Pretty prevailed in the Eleven North Handicap.

> "It was a little disappointing, but I know that's part of the game. There's nothing I can do. They sold half and wanted to be with their trainer. You've got to respect that."
>
> *– Trainer Eddie Owens Jr., about Little Ni leaving his barn*

held off a fast-closing 9-year-old Amatteroftime to win by a diminishing 1½ lengths. Great Navigator was in contention early, but fell back to sixth on the backstretch and finished a distant fourth.

"Jairo had to navigate his way to the outside and get him to relax," said Owens, who noted that Sea Streak, out of the Silver Deputy mare High Noon Nellie, lost a shoe early in the race. "That's a long way to run with three shoes. He was the best horse in the race."

It was the 10th career race and third win for the 3-year-old Sea Streak, who debuted in a stakes but still has some growing up to do, according to his trainer.

"He trains like a good horse, but he's still got a lot to learn," Owens said. "From his first race, he ran against some nice horses. Some days he puts it all together and gives you his best, some days he gets lost."

The first career race was the Smoke Glacken Stakes in September 2023, when he ran second to Book'em Danno and beat Owens' Ship to Shore, who won the Limehouse Stakes at Gulfstream in January.

"I really think he's a nice horse," Owens said. "It's all mental. We threw him to the wolves early in his career."

MONMOUTH MINUTE: The other Sea Wizard progeny to triumph Aug. 25 were Island Spirit, who won a maiden special for owner Reeve Schley and trainer Rory Huston, Electric Eel, an allowance winner for Carlos David and Shore Point Stables, and 2-year-old J J Zo Zo, a Jose Garcia homebred trained by Jose Sanchez, who came back to dominate the Smoke Glacken Stakes Sept. 7, posting every fraction to win by 8½ lengths as the 4-5 favorite in a field of eight. . . Isabelle de Tomaso, who ran Irish War Cry in the 2017 Kentucky Derby, won a maiden special with homebred Cool Spite, trained by Cal Lynch . . . Trainer Mike Dini won with two horses he bred, Summer Flower, whom he owns, and Gold Trust, owned by Ballybrit Stable . . . A day after running a good third in the Jerkens at Saratoga, Book'em Danno, bred by Greg Kilka and Bright View Farm, was honored as 2023 New Jersey-bred Horse of the Year. Some of the Atlantic Six Racing partners who own him, led by Jay Briscione, hustled back from upstate New York to accept the award between races. "We've raced Jersey-breds for a long time," said Briscione. "The purses are good and, if you have an athlete, you can go through your conditions and be successful." Briscione said Book'em Danno may run in the Perryville Stakes-G3 at Keeneland Oct. 19. ■

The Streak

DEAN DELIVERS COLLECTS FOUR STAKES WINS FOR ALLARD, STONEHEDGE

By John Piassek

Few names are more fitting than Dean Delivers: he's the dean of Mid-Atlantic sprinters, and he certainly delivered this spring and summer.

The 5-year-old chestnut gelding tore his way through sprint stakes on the Eastern Seaboard, winning four times in as many starts for trainer Ned Allard. He won the Mr. Prospector at Monmouth Park May 27, the Alapocas Run at Delaware Park July 8, the Frank J. De Francis Memorial Dash at Laurel Park July 28, and returned to Monmouth to win the Rumson Sept. 1. His summer streak added to an already-burgeoning resume which includes a victory in last year's Smile Sprint-G3 at Gulfstream Park, and four graded stakes placings, most notably a third in the 2023 Alfred G. Vanderbilt Handicap-G1 at Saratoga.

Dean Delivers continues a four-decade partnership between Allard and the Stonehedge Farm of Marilyn Campbell. Marilyn and her husband, Gil, who died in 2021, purchased Stonehedge, the former Waldemar Farm, in Williston, Fla., in 1988, and used it as a launching pad to become one of the state's most prominent breeders. Stonehedge led all Florida breeders in 2023, with earnings of $3,338,867.

Gil got involved in the sport through two of Allard's owners: Peter Fuller, best-known as the breeder/owner of Dancer's Image and Mom's Command, and *Lowell Sun* publisher John Costello.

"They brought him out to the track one day, and I showed him my horses and all that kind of stuff, and he said that he was very interested in getting in the biz," said Allard. "About a month later he called me and said, 'Let's get some horses.' The first horse Gil bought into, the Fuller-bred colt Shananie, won two stakes for Allard and earned $175,955 in the mid-1980s. From there, the Campbells were fully under the spell of the sport.

Allard has enjoyed some of his greatest successes with Stonehedge-bred runners, including Friel's for Real, a six-time stakes winner in the mid-2000s, and sprint sensation Always Sunshine, a graded winner who won 14 races and earned $807,100 in the process. Dean Delivers was more than three decades in the making. The Campbells purchased his third dam, Maryland-bred Beaty Sark (by Deputy Minister), for $40,000 as a yearling in 1987. She never raced, but produced three stakes winners, including Allard-trained Slick Lady.

Slick Lady's daughter Slick and True, sold as a yearling, won once in eight starts primarily in the Southwest, and returned to Stonehedge upon retirement. She was bred to Stonehedge stallion Cajun Breeze, one of three stallions Marilyn Campbell owns at least a share of, in 2018, and produced Dean Delivers the next February.

He received his name from a friendly neighbor.

"Toward the end of Covid, we were with some friends on the New Hampshire seacoast, and they invited us to a clambake," Marilyn said. "I thought it was a little too soon, that we should not go, so my neighbor Dean delivered the clambake to us and put it on the porch. I thought to myself, 'Wow, Dean Delivers. That's a good name for a horse.' "

Dean Delivers broke his maiden on debut at Gulfstream Park June 26, 2021, for trainer Bo Yates, and finished second in his next three starts, two stakes, including the Grade 3 Swale. A brief sojourn on the 2022 Kentucky Derby

Dean Delivers gets his fourth consecutive regional sprint stakes win in Monmouth Park's Rumson Sept. 1.

trail ended with a fifth in the Fountain of Youth-G2, and Campbell and Yates decided to keep him at shorter distances.

"We've tried him at different distances, and 6 furlongs seems to fit him right on the nose," said Campbell. "He's been in the money at 7 furlongs, but he goes a little further, and he can't quite make that extra distance."

Dean Delivers earned his first stakes victory in May 2023, taking the Big Drama at Gulfstream, and followed up with a victory in the Smile Sprint. Those performances inspired Campbell to try the Vanderbilt in his first appearance outside of Florida. He finished third behind heavy favorites Elite Power and Gunite, then lost his next four races upon return

> "He had tailed off a little in Florida, the heat was getting to him, so they sent him up to me. Within a month's time, he completely turned around and started acting like a real racehorse. He was a little bit on the quiet side, but he woke up with the cooler weather."
>
> *– Trainer Ned Allard, about Dean Delivers*

to the Sunshine State. Campbell thought a change of scenery might do him good, and transferred Dean Delivers north.

"We went to the Vanderbilt last year and came in third against some pretty stiff company, and think that knocked him out a bit," said Campbell. "We gave him some time off, had a discussion with Yates, and he felt as though he belonged somewhere else rather than Florida. It would give him more options for him to race."

The Stonehedge trainers – Allard, Yates and Kathleen O'Connell – keep in contact, so Allard knew about Dean Delivers before he arrived at Delaware Park in the spring.

"Every time I get something from Florida that they had, we're in communication, because it's a team effort," said Allard. "If I need to know something, I call Bo or Kathleen, and vice versa. Sometimes, I have to send something down there because of the stallion stakes, so it's a working team."

The Stonehedge team believed a move from Florida to the relative cool of the Mid-Atlantic would inspire Dean Delivers to find his best self.

"He had tailed off a little in Florida, the heat was getting to him, so they sent him up to me," said Allard. "Within a month's time, he completely turned around and started acting like a real racehorse. He was a little bit on the quiet side, but he woke up with the cooler weather."

By late May, Dean Delivers was ready to roll. He made his first Mid-Atlantic start, and second start outside of Florida, in the Mr. Prospector. The 9-2 second choice in the eight-horse field battled on the pace with Hurricane J through sharp fractions, then caused a hurricane of his own as he kicked away to win by 8 lengths in 1:10.43 over a sloppy track.

Following a 2½-length victory in the Alapocas Run at his new home base, Dean Delivers returned in 20 days for the De Francis Dash. Allard wasn't overly concerned about the turnaround.

"He seems to run best with a month in between races, but occasionally, you've got to come up with three or three-and-a-half weeks, only because that's the only option," Allard said. "He's one of those horses where you don't have to train him hard, he gets plenty out of a work in 50 seconds for 4 furlongs and is real happy about it. He doesn't put a lot of pressure on himself in between races, and occasionally if you come back a little bit quick, you're just fine."

Dean Delivers was more than fine in the De Francis. Breaking from the outside post in a field of seven, he led all the way and won by three-quarters of a length, capping a big day for Allard and Stonehedge as Sunny Breeze (another Cajun Breeze gelding out of a half-sister to Always Sunshine) won the Concern Stakes earlier on the Laurel Park card.

After his De Francis win, there was speculation as to where Dean Delivers might go next. Allard and Campbell elected to stay in the region and run in the 5-furlong Rumson.

"Because he had tailed off [before arriving in the Mid-Atlantic] I wanted to build up his confidence a bit," Allard said. "And Marilyn was just fine with that."

Despite his sharp form going in, Allard knew the Rumson was no gimme as Dean Delivers drew the rail post one spot inside speedy De Francis runner-up Five Dreams.

"I was really nervous about the post," Allard said. "He doesn't necessarily need to be in front, he runs well being up close and having something to run at, and I was afraid that he'd break and we'd have to apply some pressure to keep a good, clear path for him, so that made me a little nervous."

He went off at 2-5, the shortest price during his winning streak, dueled with Five Dreams and Speaking, then encountered a fresh challenge on the turn from Downtowncharlybrown. Dean Delivers briefly dropped back to third, but fought back at the top of the lane to engage Downtowncharlybrown. They raced to the wire together, but under vigorous urging from regular rider Jaime Rodriguez, Dean Delivers prevailed by a half-length in :57.72.

"It was incredible, my heart was beating so fast," said Campbell. "It was 5 furlongs, a little tough, but he dug in. He seems to love to come from behind, he doesn't want to lose, he has that extra gear, and in his past race, he really proved himself there."

Allard fretted the way the race played out.

"Around the three-eighths pole and the eighth pole, I can't say I had a tremendous amount of confidence he could continue running, but Jaime said when he asked him at the sixteenth pole, he had something left, and he just went for it," the trainer said. "I know Jaime likes him, and Jaime is a very, very good rider. He wins races all over the place. When he won at Delaware, Jaime said, 'Ned, I'll go anywhere this horse goes,' and so for a horse to impress Jaime Rodriguez, that's a feather in Dean's cap."

Allard considers the horse's attitude his biggest asset.

"He's got a super personality," Allard said. "Racehorses come to you in all types. Some are very aggressive, some are feisty, and some are very laid-back, and he's kind of a laid-back horse. I think any time a horse is easy on himself, that makes him last longer."

No matter where he goes next, Dean Delivers has moved himself to the head of Allard's 20-strong stable and cemented his place in the Stonehedge story with nine wins (six in stakes) and $787,660 earned.

"It's been a good run," said Allard, whose career included 2,801 wins through Sept. 12. "I've won a lot of stakes in my day, but I'm getting close to 80, so I'm really enjoying this run of good luck." ■

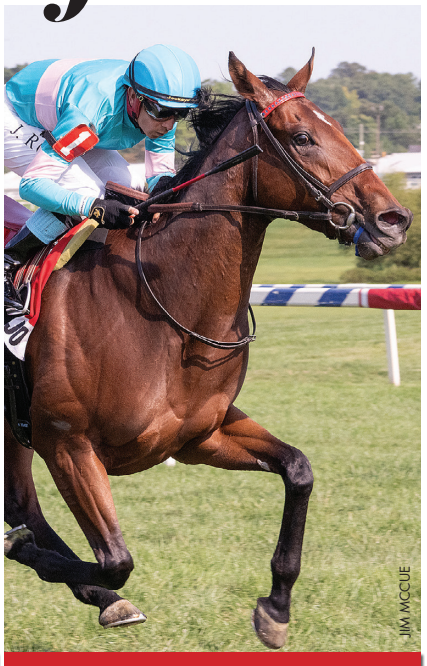
JERRY DZIERWINSKI

Jaime Rodriguez, aboard Dean Delivers for three straight stakes wins over the summer, expresses his gratitude after a victory in the De Francis Dash at Laurel Park in late July.

Big End of Summer Wins

COADY PHOTOGRAPHY

Sept. 11: Shug McGaughey-trained LIMITED LIABILITY wins $500K Nashville Gold Cup


JIM MCCUE

Sept. 14: Graham Motion-trained NO SHOW SAMMY JO wins $100K All Along S

JERRY DZIERWINSKI

Sept. 14: Brittany Russell-trained POST TIME wins $100K Polynesian S

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— Trackside: Timonium —

On The March

BAND CAMP'S SUCCESS POINTS TOWARD MARYLAND MILLION

By Joe Clancy

For the first few hours of his life, Band Camp didn't exactly inspire greatness as the colt tried to nurse on anything but his mother.

"We called him Window Licker for a while," said Dan Eubanks, co-breeder and co-owner of the now 4-year-old foaled at his family's Hillbizon Farm in Lothian, Md.

Nowadays, people just call Band Camp winner.

Trained at Laurel Park by Eubanks' 80-year-old mother Annette, also the co-breeder and co-owner, the gelded son of Bandbox won seven of his first nine starts in 2024 and was eyeing a spot on the Maryland Million card Oct. 12.

Dan Eubanks would like to try the $100,000 Sprint, but Band Camp would be heavily favored in a starter handicap on the card. The success seemed unlikely after Band Camp lost his first three races early in 2023, bucked shins as a 3-year-old and missed seven months of racing. He returned with a second in December, for a $12,500 tag, and opened 2024 with a fifth for $20,000.

Then the winning started. In February, he graduated the maiden ranks in a $12,500 maiden claimer going 6 furlongs. A month later, he thumped five others in a $20,000 non-winners of two at 5½ furlongs. Against non-winners of three in April, he got bumped at the gate, spun eight wide off the turn and finished fourth. Two weeks after that, stretched to a mile, he won again and hasn't been risked for a tag since.

"Not really," Annette Eubanks said when asked if she saw such promise in Band Camp as a young horse. "We started him for $20,000 and he didn't do anything. All of the sudden this year things just turned around. Why? I don't know."

In late May, Band Camp won a Maryland-bred or -sired allowance by 7¾ lengths in a quick 1:09.76 for 6 furlongs and added back-to-back $20,000 starter-allowance wins in June and July before taking his streak to Timonium and winning again Aug. 24. Through Sept. 8, he'd won five in a row and seven of his last eight starts. The seven overall wins put him in a five-way tie for second behind the nine put up by national leader Tennessee Moon, whose wins have come in Louisiana, Nebraska, Wyoming and Colorado.

Band Camp might be one closer to the well-traveled filly except for that April defeat.

"He did something weird at the gate," said Dan Eubanks. "He came flying at the end though, and it made us think he has definitely come into his game."

He even moved up in Eubanks' Laurel shedrow, taking the stall next to the office that used to belong to seven-time winner The Cairo Kid.

"The Cairo Kid was in that stall for a long time, he won quite a few races for me, but he's retired so Band Camp got the stall," said Annette. "That's an honor. Band Camp likes to bite, that's about all. You have to be careful when you walk by him, but he's an easy horse to train."

Dan echoes that sentiment when it comes to Band Camp's attitude, and also ties it back to the success.

"As soon as he started winning races, he grew into himself," said Dan. "Confidence, attitude, swagger, he's a little nippy now. His personality has changed and he loves that stall. He sits there and stares at the track all morning."

Band Camp's path started when Dan Eubanks spent $2,000 on 2-year-old filly Lookin At Royalty in 2014. She never raced, but trainer Greg Sacco kept her as a broodmare. She had one foal, New Jersey-bred maiden winner Big Looker, for Sacco, and moved to Eubanks while carrying a Peace and

JIM MCCUE

Band Camp scores in a Timonium allowance, his seventh win of 2024 for trainer Annette Eubanks.

Justice foal in 2017. That foal, Lookin for Justice, won three times before getting claimed last year. Hot Lookin Royal, a 5-year-old Friesan Fire mare, has won four races including a $7,500 claimer in July. Next came Band Camp, and a new life for Lookin At Royalty.

"She was a little tough, wouldn't let you near the baby and stuff like that," said Dan. "All of the mare's foals are late developing, but I found that out too late after I sold her for a riding horse."

Don't feel bad for Lookin At Royalty, whose show career includes dozens of ribbons with new owner Therese Gutman and her daughter Aubrey.

"We try to rehome all of our horses off the track if we can and my mom gets a dozen Christmas cards every year from people we've sold horses to for second careers. We got a photo of this mare and she had eight ribbons on her bridle."

Annette Eubanks' racing background goes back a little further than the 2024 success. She grew up in France, where the family's farm horse Robert (say it with a French accent) attracted her attention.

"The only horse background I had was we had a horse called Robert that pulled farm equipment," she said. "Robert wasn't too nice to ride, but I groomed him a lot and got to work with him. I always loved horses, and I would go to the village next to where we lived and ride somebody else's horses."

At 17, she moved to the United States and lived with an uncle in Forestville, Md. Long story (really) short, her second husband Guy Eubanks went to the races regularly and became an owner. He bought a farm near Charles Town, W.Va., where he teamed up with Charles "Buck" Woodson on racehorses and later had horses with trainers Bill Boniface and Steward Mitchell. Eubanks/Mitchell runner Hillbizon,

> "I just love horses and it's challenging, very challenging, to try to figure out each horse. Sometimes it gets really tough. Horses, they surprise you."
>
> *– Annette Eubanks, 80, on life as a trainer*

namesake of the Eubanks' farm, won six races including the 1980 Annapolis Handicap at Bowie and finished third in that year's Ohio Derby-G2.

With the stable growing in the mid-1980s, Annette took an interest in the horses and Mitchell suggested she try training herself.

"You know," Mitchell said, "I think you could do this."

"No," Annette replied. "I don't know enough."

That was 1985. Two years later Annette Eubanks had a trainer's license.

"I was in a barn with Mitch for a few years and the horses were still running under his name," she said. "He was a good trainer. I learned a lot from him. I could see what he was doing. It was tough at first, but then I started winning races."

Based at Bowie, she won five races in 1987 and tripled that the next year and has won at least five every year but two since. Through Sept. 8, Eubanks had won 478 races including 13 from 56 starts this year. She passed some credit to longtime employee Abraham Perez for helping make the barn go and called training horses a challenge – at any age.

"I just love horses and it's challenging, very challenging, to try to figure out each horse," she said. "Sometimes it gets really tough. Horses, they surprise you. Like Band Camp. And some you think are really going to be great are nothing. It's a fun challenge. I'm 80 years old, sometimes it gets hard. It's hard work."

Dan Eubanks races as Rising Sun Racing Stables and employs several trainers in addition to his mother. Play Harder won the Star de Naskra Stakes in June for Claudio Gonzalez. Colonel Sharp won two stakes for Hugh McMahon in 2018. Band Camp's success fits right in, with some family dynamics helping craft the blend.

"Danny and I don't get along sometimes about the horses," Annette said. "He's got lots of trainers, not just me, but we've done well together."

Dan Eubanks called it a balance.

"I have a mortgage company, rental properties and horses with other people," he said. "Sometimes Mom will get snappy with me, and I have to back off. That happens at least once a month. I'm not trying to take over, I'm just trying to help."

Fair Weather

Timonium's seven-day meet spread over two weekends and coinciding with Maryland State Fair once again showcased the state's Thoroughbred action at a unique venue. The 5-furlong track offers fans, and participants, a different perspective on racing.

Total handle reached $4,213,622, behind last year's total of $4,819,579 but well above the 2022 and 2021 figures. Horses made 400 starts in 64 total races.

Anthony Farrior won the training title with five wins from 33 starts, at least 11 more starts than anyone else at the meet. With just seven starters, John Salzman Jr. won four to finish second ahead of four trainers with three wins each. The race came down to the Sept. 1 card, where Farrior won three and Salzman won two. Neither trainer won on Closing Day Sept. 2.

Xavier Perez knocked out the jockeys' crown with eight wins from 31 rides. J.G. Torrealba, Arnaldo Bocachica and Christian Maldonado finished with six each.

■ Pennsylvania-bred **Late Frost** won the meet's only stakes, the $75,000 Shine Again going about 6½ furlongs Aug. 24. Trained by Michael Matz for Greg and Caroline Bentley's Runnymoore Racing, the daughter of Frosted battled up front early and kicked away in the stretch to win by 2¼ lengths.

Out of the Bentleys' Harlan's Holiday mare La La's Cookin, Late Frost won three of her first four starts in 2022 and 2023, but came into the Shine Again off six consecutive losses. The defeats were hardly disgraces as she placed in the Charles Town Oaks-G3, Weather Vane, Skipat and Dashing Beauty stakes before breaking through at Timonium.

The Bentleys paid $120,000 for La La's Cookin at Keeneland November in 2018. All four of her foals to race, two for the Bentleys, are winners.

■ Timonium has played host to numerous high-dollar horses at its annual May sale of 2-year-olds, but showcased an expensive horse of a different type when **Phantom Speed** showed

JERRY DZIERWINSKI

Pennsylvania-bred Late Frost heads for home in the $75,000 Shine Again, the meet's only stakes.

up in the entries for a $42,000 maiden race on Opening Day Aug. 23. A $700,000 yearling purchase at Keeneland September in 2022, the son of Arrogate placed in two starts late last year at Fair Grounds but missed the first half of 2024 and trainer Mike Stidham was tired of missing opportunities to get back to the races.

Sent off at 1-5 while facing four others at 6½ furlongs, Phantom Speed gave everyone a scare while well back through the first half-mile. Julio Hernandez angled the Pin Oak Stud runner to the rail in mid-stretch and he got up to win by a half-length.

NOTES: **Malibu Hooch**, a 2-year-old daughter of Bourbon Courage and Dr. Ronald Harris Parker's stakes-placed Malibu Moon mare Sunday in Malibu, drew off in her debut by 6½ lengths in a maiden special weight Aug. 23. A full sister to 2022 Maryland-bred champion 2-year-old filly Malibu Moonshine, Malibu Hooch was a $67,000 RNA at this year's Fasig-Tipton Midlantic May sale. She is co-owned by Harris and her trainer Todd Beattie. . . **Pure Realization** lit up the tote board when he paid $42.20 after winning a maiden claimer Aug. 31 for trainer and co-owner Hassan Elamri. The Maryland-bred son of Broad Rule and the Pure Prize mare Pure Anticipation graduated in his ninth start for Elamri and co-owner James Smith Jr. . . . **Flying to Neptune**, a rare Maryland-bred offspring of West Virginia stallion Fiber Sonde, won her debut Sept. 1. Bred by Dr. Alexandro Rubim Dias and owned by his A.R.D. Racing Stables, the bay filly is out of the Not For Love mare I Love to Fly. Trained by Farrior, the bay filly covered 4 furlongs in :46.37 while winning by 2¼ lengths . . . Owner/breeder Jay Williamson's **Mysisternancy** won at Timonium for the second consecutive year when she captured a $5,000 conditioned claimer Sept. 1. Trained by Salzman, the daughter of Mosler and the Leading the Parade mare Parade of Colors won for the fifth time overall. She's one of seven winners for her dam and a half-sister to multiple stakes winner Ournationonparade . . . Maryland-bred **Divine Fashion** won her 16th race in a starter allowance for Farrior and owner Richard Burnsworth Sept. 1 . . . **Helms Deep** won a two-neck slugfest with Gran Andrews and Uncaptured Storm in a starter allowance Sept. 2. Trained by Rodolfo Sanchez-Salomon for Designated Hitters Racing, the 6-year-old won for the ninth time. ■

Page Turner

TRIKARI CONTINUES CLIMB WITH SECRETARIAT WIN

By Ali Çetinok ■ Photographs by Coady Media

The story of Trikari, the latest turf standout for Amerman Racing and trainer Graham Motion, blends belief, patience and bold decisions as the $27,500 sales purchase turned into a Grade 1 winner and one of the top 3-year-old turf horses in the country this year with eyes on a potential start in the Breeders' Cup.

A win in the $500,000 Secretariat Stakes-G2 at Colonial Downs in New Kent, Va., Aug. 11 made it all more of a reality.

Trikari's tale began with a stroke of luck and a keen eye. Bloodstock agents Bob and Sean Feld worked the Ocala Breeders' Sales Company's October yearling sale in 2022. The strategy takes teamwork. Father and son split horses into groups, each taking a portion to evaluate, and after swapping thoughts and refining selections, they create a final shortlist of horses to look at more closely.

An Oscar Performance colt out of the Harlan's Holiday mare Dynamic Holiday made the shortlist. Bred in Kentucky by Michael Slezak and Amy Boll, the bay cost Angel Ordonez $9,000 as a short yearling in January and looked like a prospect worth pursuing nine months later.

"I can't remember if I looked at the horse first or my son did, but when I saw him, I loved him," Bob Feld said. "I loved everything about him."

Despite their affection for the colt, the Felds weren't actively looking to buy a yearling at the sale and didn't have a specific client. When Trikari didn't sell – at a final bid of $30,000 – Feld was surprised.

"I looked at the results as the sale was going on, and I saw he was bought back for $30,000. I'm like, 'Oh my God, that horse is a much better horse than $30,000,' " Feld said. He returned to the Ordonez Thoroughbreds consignment to investigate why the horse didn't sell and saw some concerning notes on the veterinarian report.

Feld wasn't as discouraged as others.

"There were some things on there that probably discouraged some people," he said. He also figured Trikari's issues could be managed with patience. He called Amerman Racing, which campaigned Oscar Performance to victories in four Grade 1 races, including the 2016 Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf and 2017 Secretariat (when run at Arlington Park), and pitched the idea of buying the colt for less than his initial reserve.

"Listen, this horse is a really nice physical," Feld said. "I'll vet the horse out, and if everything checks out, I'll offer $25,000. Would you be willing to buy him?"

Longtime owners of such standouts as Lido Palace (Chi), Adoration, Coffee Clique and Siphonic in addition to Oscar Performance, Jerry and John Amerman embraced Feld's opinion. Feld offered $25,000. Ordonez held firm at $30,000. They eventually settled on $27,500, which Feld laughs about.

"It's a very odd price for a horse to sell," he said, "but that's how it happened."

Motion trained Trikari's dam Dynamic Holiday and her half-sister Varenka to graded turf stakes victories for Pennsylvania owner/breeder George Strawbridge Jr.'s Augustin Stable, so became the logical choice to train Trikari.

"They had just asked me to take some horses and the Amerman name is one of those names you want to train for," Motion said. "They were like, 'You trained the mare, you should get to train this one.' "

In another connection, Motion won multiple Grade 1 turf stakes with Miss Temple City, bred and co-owned by

Trikari gallops home in front in the Grade 2 Secretariat Stakes at Colonial Downs in August.

Bob Feld. Trikari caught Motion's attention early, though the trainer preached patience. Not an early 2-year-old, the colt went to Keeneland to make his debut in October – a move Motion doesn't make unless horses show potential.

The first start, going 1⅛ miles on the turf Oct. 28, didn't exactly go as planned as Trikari wound up last of 12 for jockey John Velazquez.

"He just ran so greenly that day, and obviously we were pretty disappointed," said Motion, based at Maryland's Fair Hill Training Center. The loss didn't discourage the trainer. Trikari showed flashes in morning workouts, and looked like an athlete. Patience seemed like the right approach.

"We got back to Florida and kind of regrouped, and he's sort of taken off from there." Motion said. "I certainly liked him a lot."

Two months after the debut defeat, he won a maiden race on Gulfstream Park's Tapeta surface at 27-1. Back on the turf for his 3-year-old debut in a first-level allowance, he was beaten a neck going 7½ furlongs at Gulfstream in February. Trikari became a stakes winner in the $250,000 Rushaway on Turfway Park's Tapeta track March 23, pulled a 47-1 upset in the $600,000 American Turf-G2 at Churchill Downs on Derby Day May 4 over 13 others, and finished third in Penn National's Penn Mile-G3 May 31.

Trikari started his summer campaign in Aqueduct's Belmont Derby Invitational-G1 going 1⅜ miles July 6, defeating White Palomino by a head with Godolphin's globe-trotting favorite Legend of Time (GB) third.

A few days after that win, Motion was going over options at his Fair Hill base and stopped at Trikari's stall.

"He's dead honest and he is gorgeous," Motion said. "It's fun to see a horse like this develop. If you went around and looked at all my horses, you'd pick him out. You wouldn't have to know who he is. His stride is extraordinary. He's not tough [to handle], but he's very on it all the time. He takes his races so well it's kind of hard to back off him."

"I can't remember if I looked at the horse first or my son did, but when I saw him, I loved him. I loved everything about him."

– Bob Feld about seeing Trikari as a yearling at the 2022 Ocala fall sale

Motion bypassed the Saratoga Derby-G1 – originally carded for Aug. 3 but ultimately run on the same day as the Secretariat due to weather – in favor of more time between races. Once a Grade 1 fixture on the Arlington Million undercard at Chicago's Arlington Park, the Secretariat was run mainly at 1¼ miles in its first iteration and counts among its past winners champion Mac Diarmida, Maryland-bred star Awad, champion Kitten's Joy and Breeders' Cup Turf-G1 winner Highland Reel (Ire). Moved to Colonial last year after the sale of Arlington by Churchill Downs Inc., and downgraded to a Grade 2, the now 1-mile stakes attracted six runners while facing competition from several other graded turf stakes for sophomores.

Fans made American Derby winner Brilliant Berti a slight favorite over Trikari. They rated off early leaders General Ledger and Mattingly through splits of :24.24 and :48.26. Velazquez revved up Trikari on the turn and he roared to the front in mid-stretch, opening 3 quick lengths on the field and seeing out a 2¼-length win over Brilliant Berti. In a Jam finished third after 1:34.92. Each quarter-mile was run faster than the one before it with the final split in :22.94.

Trikari won for the fifth time in eight starts and pushed his career earnings to $1,303,530 with the $306,900 Secretariat payday – seven years after his sire won the race.

Motion's strategy had always been to take things step by step, ensuring Trikari was never pushed too hard, too soon. After the Secretariat win, he began to consider bigger targets, including the possibility of entering Trikari in the Breeders' Cup Mile-G1 at Del Mar Nov. 2.

"I think it's the right time to think about running him against older horses," Motion said. "This horse really hasn't done anything wrong, and he just seems to keep improving. After he won the Secretariat, I certainly started thinking about the Mile and how best to get him there."

Like Motion, Feld has preached cautious optimism.

"He's earned $1.3 million, and Marcus Hersh in the *Daily Racing Form* wrote an article saying he might be the best 3-year-old turf horse in the country," Feld said. "And we feel that he probably is.

"The horse is going to have to take us there. We're not going to go to the Breeders' Cup just to get a free hat and a free lunch. He's going to have to earn his way."

Million Day

Rain from Tropical Storm Debby pushed the Arlington Million card back a day, and a simulcast feed issue delayed the races almost an hour, but Colonial Downs managed to shine and showcased some of the country's best on a day worth in excess of $2,850,000.

Godolphin's Nations Pride (Ire) won the Million itself, living up to his even-money favoritism to score by 1¾ lengths for trainer Charlie Appleby and jockey William Buick. The winner came in off a second to stablemate Measured Time (GB) in the Manhattan-G1 in June at Saratoga, and collected his 10th lifetime victory and fourth in Grade/Group 1 company. The others came at Saratoga in 2022 and in Canada and Germany last year.

Moira and Fev Rover (Ire) put on a show in the $500,000 Beverly D.-G2 as the former prevailed by a head after 1 3/16 miles. Trained by Kevin Attard for Lanni Bloodstock, SF Racing and Madaket Stable, the Canadian-bred daughter of Ghostzapper won the Queen's Plate in 2022 and finished third in last year's Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Turf-G1.

Trainer Mike Stidham added to a strong Colonial meet with a victory by Dream Shake in the $150,000 Van Clief Stakes at 5½ furlongs on the turf. Owned by Exline-Border Racing, Peter Eurton, Richard Hausman and Stonestreet Stables, the 6-year-old Twirling Candy gelding ousted Pennsylvania-bred Witty by three-quarters of a length (with Virginia-bred Determined Kingdom third) while winning for the fifth time.

Pennsylvania-bred Carmelina won the $100,000 Penny Chenery Stakes for 3-year-old fillies, her fourth stakes win for Cash Is King, LC Racing and trainer Butch Reid. Lilith Boucher bred the daughter of Maximus Mischief and won six races as a trainer with her Virginia-bred dam Complete

Alrington Million Day at Colonial Downs included (clockwise from top left): Nations Pride sprints for the wire in the Grade 1 Arlington Million; Moira prevails by a head in the Grade 2 Beverly D.; Dream Shake (black blinkers) captures the Van Clief Stakes; Pennsylvania-bred Carmelina (right) gets her fourth stakes win in the Penny Chenery.

St., who was bred by Mignon C. Smith's Mede Cahaba Stable and Stud.

One race earlier, another from the first crop of Maximus Mischief came home on top as Regalo nosed out Awesome Ruta in the $100,000 Petramalo Mile for 3-year-olds on the main track. The Brittany Russell trainee owned by Goodfella's recorded his first stakes win and completed a mile in 1:33.71. The track record is 1:33.70.

Distaffers competed at 5½ furlongs on the turf in the $150,000 Andy Guest Stakes, with favorite Beauty of the Sea holding clear of Maryland-bred Hollywood Walk by 1½ lengths. It was the second stakes win in a row for the chestnut Bucchero filly owned by Ironhorse Racing Stable and trained by Joe Orseno, after Monmouth's Goldwood in June.

NOTES: Mike Trombetta (15 wins) edged Stidham (13) for the training title, with Russell (10) checking in third. Godolphin won seven races to edge Larry Johnson by one for the owners' crown. Ben Curtis won a tight jockeys' race 24-23 over Mychel Sanchez with Antonio Gallardo (21) third . . . Fourteen horses won two races at the meet. ■

Additional reporting by Joe Clancy

— Trackside: Charles Town —

Model Horse

PENGUIN POWER CONTINUES TO BUILD ON LENGTHY CAREER

By Joe Clancy ■ *Photographs by Coady Media*

You want a racehorse? Get one like Penguin Power. The West Virginia-bred sports a record of 20 wins, eight seconds and eight thirds in 42 starts. He won as a 2-year-old in his first start in 2017. He won eight times in nine starts as a 4-year-old. In August, he picked up the first win of his 9-year-old season with a final-stride lunge in the $40,000 Last Enchantment Stakes at Charles Town.

All to the delight of owner David Raim.

"He just doesn't stop running," Raim said in September. "He's like the Eveready Bunny."

Energizer, Eveready . . . you get the point. Penguin Power is more reliable – and longer-lasting – than a fresh pack of AAA batteries. No matter the mascot.

"You can't imagine a horse to have this kind of longevity," said Raim, who purchased the son of Fiber Sonde from breeder John McKee as a yearling. "He always tries, always gives his all."

The chestnut gelding's pedigree goes way back with McKee, who trained third dam Traveling Treat, second dam Aye Jacoby and dam Aye Robbin. All won, all produced multiple winners. Aye Robbin's sire Robb stood at McKee's Beau Ridge Farm, where Fiber Sonde stands. McKee died in February 2023, but his impact on West Virginia racing continues through his wife Cyndy at Beau Ridge and Charles Town and via horses such as Penguin Power.

Trained by Jeff Runco, Penguin Power won his debut going 6½ furlongs at Charles Town Sept. 21, 2017. Off for 14 months, he returned late in 2018 and put together a string of 11 races – nine wins, a second and a third – over the next year. He won three times in 2020, once in 2021, three times in 2022, twice last year and broke through in the Last Enchantment to get on the board after seconds in three of his four prior starts this year.

Along the way, Penguin Power has won a race on West Virginia Breeders Classics night for a record five consecutive years – the 7-furlong Onion Juice three times and the 4½-furlong Dash for Cash twice. The earner of $614,598 will try to make it six in a row on the 38th renewal of the West Virginia breeding program's signature card at Charles Town Oct. 12.

Raim's formidable list of West Virginia-bred stars begins with Muad'dib, another McKee-bred with 16 wins, $948,779 and wins in two Sam Huff West Virginia Breeders Classic Stakes, the richest race on the WVBC card. But nobody's pushing Penguin Power out of the picture.

"I'm not a horse whisperer so I can't say I've had any discussion with him, but Jeff says it's very clear that he is happiest when he is training and racing," said Raim. "He does not like to take time off. We give it to him, make him take time off. He doesn't race a lot because he doesn't have any conditions left. Jeff is pretty darn convinced he really likes racing. He was a little overshadowed when Muad'dib was on a real run, but he's got longevity."

Raim grew up in New York and attended the races at Aqueduct and Belmont Park. He stayed a fan, but didn't jump into ownership until meeting owner/breeder Larry Johnson through work (Raim as a corporate attorney, forensic accountant Johnson as a frequent expert witness). Raim partnered on a horse Johnson had with trainer Graham Motion, and bought a few on his own, but ultimately focused on West Virginia because the model worked from an economic standpoint.

KATHERINE TURNBULL

Penguin Power arrives in time to win the Last Enchantment Stakes on the Charles Town Classic card.

The stable typically includes 15-20 horses. Raim buys "four to six" a year, privately or at the sales, sends them to Runco and campaigns almost exclusively at Charles Town. Raim's Equibase statistics include 210 wins and more than $6 million in purses earned since 2004. A big stable was never really the goal.

"Even once I started out as an owner, I assumed I'd have one or two or three horses," Raim said. "I never thought I would have this, but my experience is the economics are better if you have a larger amount as long as you don't get crazy in terms of the prices you pay for them or the number you have."

Penguin Power won the Last Enchantment on the undercard of the Charles Town Classic-G2 and Charles Town Oaks-G2 stakes, but Raim called the Breeders Classics a goal for his stable. He won five there in 2021, counts 18 total victories as owner or co-owner, and hoped to be represented by Penguin Power, Muad'dib, Soul Catcher, Duncan Idaho and The Sky is Falling this year.

"A long time ago, Jeff and I worked out a way forward for me as an owner and it's been to continue to try to have well-bred West Virginia-bred horses and the Breeders Classics Night is a big night for me," Raim said. "There are more races there for me than there are on Charles Town Classic night."

Classic Classic

Skippylongstocking won the $1 million Charles Town Classic for the second consecutive year, joining Art Collector (2021, 2022), Imperative (2014, 2017) and Researcher (2009, 2010) as two-time winners of the race. Trained by Saffie Joseph Jr. for Daniel Alonso, the 5-year-old son of Exaggerator has never lost in the Mountain State, adding a win in the 2022 West Virginia Derby-G3 at Mountaineer Park to his slate.

RENEE TOBIT

Skippylongstocking leads the way in the Charles Town Classic, his second consecutive win in the $1 million Grade 2 stakes.

"We always had this race in our minds after how well he ran last year, but he had to give us every right sign. And he's come out of the race super and I feel like he's sitting on a big, big effort."

–Trainer Saffie Joseph Jr., before Skippylongstocking won the Charles Town Classic again

After pulling up in the Pegasus World Cup-G1 in January, Skippylongstocking has righted his ship with wins in the Challenger-G3 at Tampa Bay Downs in March and the Oaklawn Handicap-G2 in April, a third in the Stephen Foster-G1 and a fifth in Saratoga's Whitney-G1 leading into Charles Town.

"We thought he ran a pretty good race in the Stephen Foster, so we wanted to give him a try at Saratoga," said Joseph before the Charles Town race. "We always had this race in our minds after how well he ran last year, but he had to give us every right sign. And he's come out of the race super and I feel like he's sitting on a big, big effort."

Jockey Jose Ortiz went right to the front on the even-money favorite, who maintained a length advantage before repelling several challenges and drawing off by 5¾ lengths in 1:50.34 for 1⅛ miles. Velocitor finished second with Komorebino Omoide (Jpn) third. Skippylongstocking won for the ninth time in 26 starts while pushing his earnings to $2,992,985.

In his first start at home in 10 months, West Virginia-bred Coastal Mission settled for fourth as the second choice among a field of 10 for owner/trainer Runco. In between, he won Laurel Park's Frank Whiteley and placed in graded stakes at Monmouth Park and Aqueduct.

Joseph also won the Charles Town Oaks, as Mystic Lake and jockey Mike Smith handled nine others in the 7-furlong stakes for 3-year-old fillies. Owned by C2 Racing Stable and Stefania Farms, the daughter of Mo Town won the Miss Preakness-G3 and finished second in the Victory Ride-G3 leading into the Charles Town try. Mystic Lake pressed the early pace and took over in the stretch to score by 5¾ lengths in 1:24.18. My Mane Squeeze finished second with Princess Madison third.

West Virginia-bred Overnight Pow Wow outran her 45-1 odds, leading early and finishing fourth – beaten three-quarters of a length for second – in her graded stakes debut for Cyndy McKee and Beau Ridge Farm. The Fiber Sonde filly had won her previous three starts, including an intra-stable upset of Direct the Cat in the $75,000 Sylvia Bishop Memorial at Charles Town July 27. Leading into that race, Direct the Cat had won six in a row by a combined 58¾ lengths.

NOTES: **Teachintherelease** won the $75,000 Frank Gall Memorial, a 7-furlong West Virginia-bred stakes for older horses, for owner Robert Cole Jr. and trainer Stephen Murdock. Bred by John A. Casey, the 4-year-old Windsor Castle gelding scored for the fourth time this year while becoming a stakes winner. . . **Hessica** collected her ninth lifetime win in the $75,000 Sadie Hawkins, a 7-furlong West Virginia-bred stakes for older fillies and mares. The 9-5 favorite pulled away from early leader Barbers Point late to score by a 1½ lengths for owner/trainer/breeder Kristy Petty. . . **Maggie's Girl** ruled the $40,000 Autumn Stakes for Grams Racing Stable and trainer Tim Grams, the ninth win in 14 starts for the homebred daughter of Uncle Lino. She's never finished worse than third. . . The $500,000 Misty Bennett Pink Ribbon Stakes went to Louisiana-bred **Free Like a Girl,** who prevailed by three-quarters of a length over Clearly Unhinged in the 7-furlong stakes for older fillies and mares. . . **Valentine Candy** won the $500,000 Robert Hilton Memorial at 7 furlongs for trainer Steve Asmussen and owners Bill and Corinne Heiligbrodt, Jackpot Farm, Whispering Oaks Farm and Coteau Grove Farms. West Virginia-bred Jubawithatwist wound up fourth, a neck out of third, for Petty. ■

— Broker's Tip —

BY RICK ABBOTT

Bow My Dear

I know it's hard for some readers to believe but there was a time in the not too distant past when it was hard to access pedigree and racing information in a timely fashion. This gave a person with the knowledge of recent events a distinct advantage in the business of trading Thoroughbred horses.

Dick Broadbent was one of the first to recognize this knowledge gap and he sought to capitalize on it by using his computer network (which became Bloodstock Research). Many young and eager newcomers, upon arrival in Lexington, were hired by Broadbent to comb through the *Racing Form* and identify the dams of recent stakes winners. These young and eager beavers would then contact the breeders and try to buy those mares. They had many avenues of attack, but none involved congratulating the breeders of the new stakes winner.

The cold callers might say, "I have a client who is standing a new stallion and he is looking for mares by (insert here the sire of the target mare) and saw that you bought (insert here the name of the recent stakes producer) at such and such a sale. I'm wondering if you still own her." If the answer was yes, the caller would inquire about the mare's breeding status and eventually get around to attempting to buy the mare. The object of the exercise was to close the deal before news of the stakes winner reached the breeder. You didn't even need to be the breeder. If you had a sister to the recent stakes winner, the calls would also start to arrive.

I had a standing rule with our clients. If they were ever to receive such a call, politely hang up the phone and call me immediately. Then, I could do the research and find out what had happened the previous weekend to prompt the call

In 1982 I purchased the mare Line of Duty, in foal to Silent Cal, for $11,000 on behalf client Lynne Scott. A foal of 1977 by Buffalo Lark, the mare was from a nice family but her dam, a daughter of Lt. Stevens named Wac, had yet to produce anything of significance. In the spring of 1983 Line of Duty produced a filly by Silent Cal and Mrs. Scott bred the mare to Rise Jim, a stallion we were standing at Charlton. In September, Mrs. Scott started to get calls about her mare and whether she would consider selling her. Following my rule, she called me and I did some research. The mare's half-brother, Lear Fan, had won his first three starts including the Group 2 Champagne Stakes at Doncaster. He was the betting favorite for the 1984 Epsom Derby.

Armed with that knowledge, Mrs. Scott elected to retain the mare and sold yearlings out of her for many years. Lear Fan didn't win the Derby, but he did win the Group 1 Prix Jacques Le Marois and enjoyed a successful career in the stud at Gainesway Farm.

I once tried to play the other side of the aisle with humorous and mixed results. We had a client in Virginia whose name is lost in the fog of memory, but who bred horses under the name Oakland Farm Partnership. In 1982 and 1983 we sold yearlings for them by Dancing Count and Hard Work. Both were out of the mare Bow My Dear. Neither yearling rang a bell at the sale. The Dancing Count brought $3,000 and the Hard Work sold for $9,000. In 1984 Oakland Farm Partnership, through another agent, sold Bow My Dear at the Maryland Sales Agency mixed sale for $900, in foal to Park's Policy.

Bow My Dear seemed destined for a life obscurity until a week or so after she was sold. On Nov. 14, 1984, her 2-year-old by Hard Work, now named Sports Medicine, won his first start, a $25,000 maiden claimer at Keystone Racetrack (now Parx Racing). Two weeks later in his second start he won an allowance race by 7½ lengths. Sports Medicine was trained by Dennis "Goose" Heimer who was, at that time, among the top trainers at Keystone having trained for the powerful stable of Dan Lasater. Goose was a man of few words who won a lot of races.

Sensing that there was a stakes race in Sports Medicine's future, I decided I had to find and buy Bow My Dear because Sports Medicine, in my mind, was Kentucky Derby-bound. I traced the mare to a small ramshackle farm in western

Maryland; spoke with the husband of the couple who owned the farm; told him of my love of the mare and how I hadn't realized that she was in the sale or I would have bid on her and taken her home with me. He seemed amenable to making a profit on his purchase. I offered him $2,500 for her and he agreed to sell.

I arranged to pick up and pay cash for the mare the following Saturday and, having raided the cash stash that I kept in my desk for just such occasions, I jumped in the van and headed for Maryland and my destiny to own the dam of a Derby winner. I would describe the farm as one in which no piece of building material was being used for its intended purpose. Roofing metal was fashioned into fencing, claw foot tubs replaced water troughs – you get the idea. I was greeted by a genial older man and his wife. I could immediately sense that that Ma (as he called her) was not buying any part of my story. The more we talked the more skeptical she became. She was wise to my hustle.

We were in the kitchen when I decided that, if I put the cash on the kitchen table, she might be swayed. I started counting out the hundred-dollar bills and it turned out that I was $100 short. Oh crap! Dixie had been into my stash to go grocery shopping. I sputtered and stammered, looked in my wallet to find another $50 but I needed that for gas. I promised to mail them the last $100. Then the husband smiled and said $2,400 would do nicely. Ma had also come around. I had the feeling that they had been in each other's stash a time or two.

Needless to say, Sports Medicine did not win the Derby. He placed second in the North Call Stakes at Keystone, won 16 races in 59 starts and earned $226,707 in a five-year career. Our son Jamie (aka "Red") and I were at Keystone one day in 1985 and I took him to meet Goose Heimer. I told Goose that Jamie's college tuition depended on the success of Sports Medicine. As I said, Goose was a man of few words. On this occasion his only reply was, "I hope he's planning on Bucks County Community College." Jamie was deflated.

He went, instead, to Princeton and we did get a little tuition bump from Bow My Dear's last foal. For some reason we decided to sell the Smarten colt King Laurie as a weanling at the 1990 Keeneland November sale. He sold for $6,000 and was immediately shipped off to Canada. As the van left the grounds I watched my potential breeder's awards fly out the window. Amazingly, after 22 starts in Canada he was claimed by Uriah St. Lewis and showed up in the entries at Philadelphia Park. He made 19 starts in Pennsylvania and earned $6,500 in breeder's awards. Every penny was applied to Princeton tuition. ■

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The Steeplechase Times

Summer of Fun

JUMPERS PUT ON STAKES SHOW AT AQUEDUCT, SARATOGA

By Joe Clancy ■ *Photographs by Tod Marks*

Just 20 races made up the summer National Steeplechase Association schedule, but horses and their connections made the most of the opportunities at Aqueduct Racetrack, Saratoga Race Course and Colonial Downs despite battling busy shipping schedules, weather cancelations and the other variables involving horses who leap over obstacles for a living.

The New York lineup actually began in the spring, or tried to, with the creation of the Beverly R. Steinman Stakes-G1 as part of the Belmont Stakes Racing Festival at Saratoga June 9. The $150,000 stakes lured eight entries, who made the trek north from Pennsylvania, Maryland and even South Carolina, before rain saturated the course and the race didn't happen. The NSA and the New York Racing Association moved the Steinman to Aqueduct June 20.

Nobody appreciated the delay more than L'Imperator (Fr), who couldn't make the Saratoga race due to a foot abscess. Trainer Arch Kingsley figured he could heal that in 11 days and his horse didn't disappoint – storming through the stretch to score by 2 lengths over Rampoldi Plan, who was a head in front of Ziggle Pops (GB) after 2⅜ miles. Ridden by Jordan Gainford for Hudson River Farms, L'Imperator won for the third time since switching to jump racing in 2023 after a flat career that included a win the 2022 Fort Marcy-G2 for trainer Chad Brown.

Hudson River paid $75,000 for the Holy Roman Emperor (Ire) gelding at Keeneland's horses of racing age sale in 2022. Kingsley taught the now 7-year-old how to jump at Camden, S.C., and L'Imperator did the rest. He won a maiden hurdle at the Iroquois meet in May 2023, added a Saratoga allowance that summer and placed in four stakes before the Steinman.

Foot issues have been part of the story all along.

"He's always had really fragile feet," Kingsley said. "We bought him for 75 grand and with form like that I figured I was not going to be able to touch him. I felt like he was going to be $200,000. He didn't have hind shoes on at the sale and was walking around on eggshells. He wouldn't walk the way you wanted him to at a sale."

Third at Great Meadow in May, L'Imperator was targeting the original Steinman, until he wasn't.

"He was sound for three weeks, all the way up until a few days before the race," said Kingsley, who gets stalls at Saratoga for the summer. "We were going to make it, then boom. I believe maybe there was a gravel that had gotten in there and it was working its way up through the foot and it hadn't gotten to the nerve yet. For the layman, you'd say it just takes a while to brew and you don't know. It'll be something they step on or something they do – if the horse had better feet, it wouldn't bother him that much."

The race honored the contributions of Lancaster, Pa., resident Steinman, whose connection to American jump racing goes back decades and includes roles as an owner, race-meet supporter and NSA board member and officer. A Saratoga resident in the summer, Steinman campaigned such horses as Grade 1 winner Dark Equation, 1970s flat/jump stakes winner Chrisaway, 1977 Temple Gwathmey Handicap winner and Colonial Cup runner-up Bel Iman (Fr) and 11-time winner Don Panta (Chi). On the flat, Steinman campaigned

L'Imperator charges down the stretch ahead of Ziggle Pops (left) and Rampoldi Plan in the Beverly Steinman Stakes at Aqueduct.

Grade 1 winner and $1.053 million earner Colstar among others.

On to Saratoga

Stakes horses lined up again at Saratoga for the A.P. Smithwick Memorial-G1 July 21, four days later than originally scheduled thanks to rain again. This time, Ziggle Pops took the measure of six others including L'Imperator, who checked in fourth.

Trained by Jack Fisher for Bruton Street-US, the 7-year-old improved off the Aqueduct race and quickened through the stretch to draw off by 4¼ lengths over Pickanumber (Ire) with Freddy Flintshire a head back in third. Favorite Abaan, who defeated L'Imperator twice, finished in a dead heat for fifth with Going Country (Ire).

"I think all he could do is really go forward just because of that racetrack experience, that sharpness, how fast they go," said winning jockey Graham Watters. "Maybe he just took that run the last day. It worked out really well today. They went a gallop in front and he quickened. The last day, we

"He was sound for three weeks, all the way up until a few days before the race. We were going to make it, then boom."

– Trainer Arch Kingsley, about having to scrap plans to run L'Imperator in the Beverly Steinman at Saratoga in June; he won the rescheduled race at Aqueduct

Ziggle Pops (right, white face) bides time behind Going Country (center) and alongside Abaan before rallying late to take the A.P. Smithwick Memorial at Saratoga.

didn't go that quick, and he did a bit too much throughout the race. Today, he was lovely and settled and jumped a bit more fluently."

Another horse's blunder helped win the race. West Newton (GB) clouted the sixth fence with a lap to go, forcing Ziggle Pops out of a stalking spot and nearly off course inside a cone.

"I was right behind him, and got shuffled back to last place," Watters said. "But in hindsight, it was actually the best thing because I was able to get onto the heels of them, and he took me into it. If I had been maybe in fourth there, I might have got there too soon because the other horses are going to push you along."

Instead, Ziggle Pops got back to stalking and followed five horses around the final turn before arriving inside of everyone in the stretch and finishing like a flat horse.

Campaigned in England by Bruton Street partner Charlie Noell's Merriebelle Farm and Jared Sullivan's Sullivan Bloodstock, Ziggle Pops ran five times as a juvenile in 2019, winning a 7-furlong turf race at Brighton. At 3, he won on the all-weather at Lingfield going the same trip before losing his next five and heading to the United States.

"Jared didn't want to stay in and Bruton Street bought the other part," said Noell, who owned Group 1 flat winner Tiggy Wiggy with Sullivan. "I was on a plane so I missed the race live and didn't see it until the replay. I was pretty sure we were going to be fifth or sixth. He just kept fading back and I thought it was obviously not Ziggy's day. When he got that opening, boy did he explode through that. He had some kick at the end."

Two more rainouts, one with the horses in the paddock, deleted the Jonathan Kiser Stakes from the schedule and put the top-division horses back in the spotlight for the Jonathan Sheppard Handicap-G1 Aug. 14. L'Imperator and Ziggle Pops missed it, leaving Irish import Zarak the Brave (Fr) the favorite in his American debut and first start since April. He faced seven foes including Abaan, Pickanumber and Going Country from the Smithwick and Jimmy P from the Steinman.

It turned out to be Jimmy P's day as he went one better than his second in the 2023 Sheppard for Madaket Stables and Molly and Paul Willis. Trained by Keri Brion, the winner came in off four defeats in Grade 1 company but made the most of a sharp pace cut out by Pickanumber and jockey Jamie

Jimmy P sails a fence midway through his Grade 1 score in the Jonathan Sheppard Handicap at Saratoga.

Bargary. Ten lengths back early, Jimmy P worked into the race with a lap to go.

Stephen Mulqueen saved ground around the fourth of five turns, advanced to third, came out from behind the leader at the second-last fence and gunned away from the last. He put 2 quick lengths on Pickanumber and kept widening as the others had no answer. Jimmy P won by 34½ lengths as Going Country stayed for second and Abaan a tired third. Zarak the Brave fell at the second fence and Pickanumber wound up 49¼ lengths back in fifth after leading for about 2 miles.

"When we turned down the back, I was following Jamie and I just angled out, so I'd make sure he got a clean run," Mulqueen said. "When I angled out, he picked up and winged the last. I knew from there it would take a good one to get by him."

A former Sheppard assistant, Brion remembered some training schedules from her Hall of Fame former boss and sent Jimmy P out for two sharp 5-furlong breezes at Fair Hill Training Center leading up to the Sheppard after the 6-year-old son of Slumber (GB) finished a tired fourth in the Steinman at Aqueduct. Sheppard won the race, then called the New York Turf Writers Cup, 15 times – frequently using sharp workouts on the Oklahoma training track's turf course at Saratoga as final tighteners.

After the Steinman, Brion replaced long, slow, steady 6-furlong saunters with fellow jumper Freddy Flintshire with speed-instilling moves with flat filly Virtual.

"He came back from the Steinman so tired, I said we need to regroup and get this," Brion said. "I said the only way we're going to have this horse ready to do this today was to train him like that. He had two proper five-eighths, then he went three-eighths with Going Country last week and we brought him up here. I think that was the difference."

Jimmy P won once in nine flat starts for Madaket Stables and trainers Graham Motion and Leonard Powell. Madaket sold a half-interest to the Willises after Paul inquired about the horse as a prospect in 2022. Then part of a Wanamaker's digital sale, Jimmy P was withdrawn and sent to Brion. He won twice over hurdles that fall, the second via disqualification, and once in handicap company last spring.

Saratoga's third jump race came in the final week as novice hurdlers got an opportunity in the Michael G. "Mickey" Walsh Memorial Aug. 28. The race received a $25,000 purse boost to $100,000, because of the Kiser washout, and attract-

Evie's Prince (left) flashes his jumping form while shadowing Hold Hard early in the Michael G. Walsh Memorial Novice Stakes at Saratoga.

ed seven runners. Dual spring winner Hold Hard (Ire) started as the favorite and raced with Evie's Prince through a tepid 2 miles. They jumped the second-last as a team, and left the ground on even terms at the last too. From there, nothing was the same. Roused with a few slaps on the shoulder by Watters, Evie's Prince grabbed control going into the final turn and widened to the stretch. Hidden Path gave chase late, cut into the margin a bit but was no match as Evie's Prince won by 2¼ lengths for Jeff and Sondra LeHew's Shannon Hill Farm and trainer Neil Morris. Westerland (GB) finished third.

"I've been coming to Saratoga for 20 years," Jeff LeHew said. "My dream was to have a steeplechase horse run at Saratoga, and it was fulfilled today. First time ever, and we won. We're very pleased."

The Virginian rode in point-to-points, is the joint master of the Blue Ridge Hounds and is on the NSA board. Shannon Hill started its first horses under rules in 2016, with Evie's Prince taking center stage this year. Bred by Merriebelle Farm, the son of Animal Kingdom sold for $75,000 as a yearling and raced on the flat for the Texas-based Highlander Training Center. Evie's Prince won a Kentucky Downs maiden in 2021. Third in a $25,000 maiden claimer at Lone Star Park in May 2023, he joined the Morris barn in time to win on the turf at Mountaineer Park Sept. 4 and made his hurdle debut two months later. The 7-year-old won a starter maiden in April and earned the Saratoga start by winning a handicap hurdle at Colonial Downs Aug. 1.

"My guy is a big 17-hand timber horse, he gives the hurdles a foot," said Watters. "When I landed [over the last], I kicked for home, usually you would sit and wait around the bend, but I kicked for home because I didn't want to get done for toe. I committed going into the straight, I had a look at the big screen, and I could see Hidden Path just 2 lengths behind me. He was game. He'll probably be a timber horse in the future, but it's fantastic for the LeHews. I think they've been coming here for 20 years and this is their first ever runner. They were happy to just have a runner, so they're delighted. That's a great bonus."

Watters won seven races, including two stakes, from 19 jump mounts during the summer to open a five-win lead over Bargary in the jockeys' standings.

"I've never had a summer like this," he said. "Usually, I only have maybe one winner and it's Snap Decision or something. Between here and Colonial, it's been absolutely fantastic.

With prize money at Colonial Downs and the extra bonus from the canceled novice, it's definitely been a fantastic season for me."

Looking Ahead

After one more racetrack jump race, at Aqueduct Sept. 19, the schedule returns to the traditional race meets. Maryland's Shawan Downs launched the roster Sept. 28 with racing scheduled every weekend through Nov. 23.

Highlights include the return of the Colonial Cup meet at Springdale Race Course in Camden, S.C., after an eight-year hiatus Nov. 17. The Grade 1 Colonial Cup, worth $150,000, gives championship-level horses an end-of-season goal as it did when founded in 1970. Nearby Aiken wraps up the calendar six days later Nov. 23.

October will be busy, lucrative and important and gets started with the Foxfield Races in Charlottesville, Oct. 6. Run for the 46th time, the meet received a big boost when the racecourse property was purchased by the non-profit Cassiopeia Foundation in August. The decision ensured the preservation of the property as a racing venue, honoring the wishes of founder Mariann de Tejeda.

The Cassiopeia Foundation was established in 1944 by W. Alton Jones, an American industrialist and philanthropist. Over its 80-year history, the foundation has pursued its mission – the betterment of mankind – through its support of initiatives related to environmental conservation, land preservation and social justice. Jones, known for his commitment to environmental causes and social responsibility, sought to use the foundation as a vehicle for creating positive change in the world.

"We are thrilled to announce the purchase of the Foxfield property and our commitment to preserving this iconic site forever," said Zach Miller, a trustee of the Cassiopeia Foundation, Jones' great-grandson and steeplechase trainer/amateur jockey. "It is our honor to play this role in the fulfillment of the dreams of Mariann de Tejeda and create a lasting legacy that celebrates the heritage and tradition of Foxfield."

Jones, who died in 1962, was president of what is now the CITGO oil and gas company and a Thoroughbred owner and breeder.

Each of the four Virginia meets this fall will feature at least $235,000 in purses, bolstered in part by the Virginia Equine Alliance and Virginia HBPA. Foxfield starts that slate at $240,000, highlighted by a $75,000 open hurdle handicap. Virginia Fall (Oct. 12) goes to $275,000, including the $50,000 Will O'Keefe Memorial for 3-year-olds and the $50,000 National Sporting Library and Museum Cup over timber. The International Gold Cup (Oct. 26) will be worth $435,000, including a new $150,000 Grade 1 hurdle stakes honoring race co-chairman Dr. Will Allison and the $75,000 International Gold Cup timber stakes. Montpelier (Nov. 2) showcases stakes for fillies and mares and open horses over natural brush among a $245,000 purse structure.

"I've never had a summer like this. Usually, I only have maybe one winner and it's Snap Decision or something. Between here and Colonial, it's been absolutely fantastic."

– Jockey Graham Watters, after taking two of the three jump races at Saratoga

The richest stop on the circuit will be the Far Hills Races in New Jersey Oct. 19. Worth $700,000 (plus), the card includes the $250,000 American Grand National-G1, a $150,000 turf stakes at 2 miles, a $100,000 filly/mare hurdle, a $100,000 novice hurdle, a $50,000 4-year-old stakes and a $50,000 maiden sweepstakes. The latter, named the McDynamo after the Far Hills legend and racing Hall of Famer, will include a $1,000 "ante" per horse which will be added to the purse – and matched by McDynamo's owners Michael and Anne Moran. A full field of 10 will push the value to $70,000, the richest maiden hurdle race of the year.

Upstate New York goes timber racing with the 95th Genesee Valley Hunt Races Oct. 12 and the schedule goes south to Georgia for the 40th Callaway Gardens Steeplechase Nov. 2. The Pennsylvania Hunt Cup timber meet celebrates its 90th running Nov. 3, highlighted by the $35,000, 4-mile feature. Charleston hosts its fall meet, worth $110,000, Nov. 10 at Stone Ferry in Hollywood, S.C., and Aiken closes the book with its $160,000 day including a $50,000 stakes for 4-year-olds Nov. 23. ■

The Steeplechase Times

Virginia is for Jumping

COLONIAL PROGRAM SHOWCASES TWO FILLY/MARE STAKES

By Sean Clancy ■ *Photographs by Coady Media*

Colonial Downs offered another busy summer stop for steeplechasing with 16 races over five days July 11 through Sept. 5. The $100,000 Randolph D. Rouse and the $100,000 Life's Illusion Stakes for fillies and mares highlighted the Virginia meet.

Owner/trainer Arch Kingsley Jr. dominated the Rouse, finishing first and second in the $100,000 stakes Aug. 12. Exculpate led every step of the 2¼-mile stakes to cruise home by 15½ lengths in 4:00.57 over stablemate Cainudothetwist. Haint Blue (Fr) finished third. Jockey Parker Hendriks collected his first win since returning from an April back injury.

Kingsley purchased Exculpate from Jeanne Vuyosevich in the fall. An old friend from Monmouth Park, she called and said the daughter of Blame, a two-time winner on the flat, would make a jumper. Kingsley bought her sight unseen and shipped her to his Camden, S.C. base, thinking he was doing Vuyosevich a favor.

"She's been struggling with cancer and wasn't able to train her," Kingsley said. "I thought I was helping a friend out. By the end of Colonial Downs this summer, I realized that she was really helping me out. I paid next to nothing for her, and she's turned into a superstar. She's done it all."

Exculpate finished second in her debut at Aiken in March, second again in the Margaret Currey Henley Stakes at the Iroquois in May and broke her maiden against fillies and mares at Colonial Downs July 11.

"She's a big, masculine mare who has taken to the jumping from the get-go. She just likes our style, getting off the track and training on the farm," Kingsley said. "She's come back with a fresher perspective. She just sweetened up to it. She loves to jump."

A win in the Rouse and a second in the Life's Illusion improved her jump record to two wins and three seconds in five starts for a cool $123,000 for Kingsley's Atsamy Racing Club.

"It's everything. Everything. Everything," said Kingsley, whose new star even spun the calendar back a bit to the trainer's father, former point-to-point rider Arch Sr. who died in 2015. "The Rouse was my biggest day in the business. My biggest day ever. And I put business in air quotes because I've always had an awkward marriage between the business and the art of horses. She's carrying the whole barn. She broke her maiden on my dad's birthday. That was an emotional win for all of us."

Cyril Murphy expected a strong summer at Colonial Downs with Irv Naylor's Gold Charm (Ire). The daughter of Golden Horn (GB) broke her maiden and won the Rouse there last summer and the Maryland-based trainer centered her campaign around a return journey. Entered in the Rouse, Gold Charm failed the pre-race veterinary inspection.

"The summer got turned upside down and we weren't able to run her as many times as we hoped. If we thought

Distaff hurdlers set the tone at Colonial Downs in a pair of $100,000 stakes. Exculpate (top) won a maiden allowance hurdle before winning the Randolph D. Rouse in August; Gold Charm (bottom) streaks home in the Life's Illusion in September.

> "It's everything. Everything. Everything. The Rouse was my biggest day in the business. My biggest day ever."
>
> *– Owner/trainer Arch Kingsley Jr., who sent out Exculpate and Cainudothetwist to run 1-2 in the Randolph D. Rouse*

anything was wrong with her, she wouldn't have left the barn that morning," Murphy said. "We brought her home, we had her scanned and ultrasounded and there wasn't a pimple on her. The only day of training she missed was the day she spent standing in the barn at Colonial. That was that."

Murphy regrouped and waited for the Life's Illusion, named for the Maryland-bred steeplechase star of the 1970s.

Sometimes it's worth the wait.

Jockey Harrison Beswick settled Gold Charm way off the pace set by Exculpate in the Sept. 5 race and gradually worked into contention. The 5-year-old mare rolled past Exculpate turning for home and drew off to win by 2¾ lengths. Exculpate held on for second with My Forever Annie (Ire) third after 2¼ miles in 3:57.33.

"It was nice. We've always liked her; she's always done what we've asked," Murphy said. "I don't know if she's a racetrack horse, it's just where those filly and mare stakes are. It was always the hope to get back to the track, the competition, an even gallop is what she enjoys and she likes the quicker ground. It gives her a good place to run."

Gold Charm improved her record to three wins, a second and two thirds from seven starts for Naylor and Murphy. She cost $24,872 as a maiden flat horse at the Tattersalls Horses in Training Sale in 2022.

While the Saratoga jump program focused on stakes, Colonial's steeplechase slate offered variety and served it up via races won by nine trainers. In addition to Kingsley and Murphy, Mark Beecher, Keri Brion, Jack Fisher, Neil Morris, Kathy Neilson, Todd Wyatt and Leslie Young won races. ■

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So Good for So Long

Racing years at the highest level defined newest Hall of Fame members Alma North, Richard's Kid, Shine Again

By Cindy Deubler

Coglianese Photography

The ultra-consistent Shine Again won Saratoga's Grade 1 Ballerina Stakes twice for breeder/ owner Allaire duPont, earned $1,271,840, and was the 2003 Maryland-bred Horse of the Year.

Flash in the pans they were not.

The Maryland Thoroughbred Hall of Fame class of 2024 – Alma North, Richard's Kid and Shine Again – provided years of enjoyment for fans and connections.

Combined, they raced 17 years, made 159 starts, won 30 stakes, and earned four Maryland-bred Horse of the Year titles.

"This year's inductees are indicative of the reach of our great Maryland-bred horses and

Benoit Photo

Distance-loving Richard's Kid won back-to-back runnings of Del Mar's Grade 1 Pacific Classic on his way to earning $2,482,259 and being named Maryland-bred Horse of the Year twice.

their breeders. Mr. Meyerhoff, Mrs. duPont, Dr. Leonard and the Bender family represented some of Maryland's most dedicated and successful breeders," said Cricket Goodall, executive director of the Maryland Horse Breeders Association.

The three were elected by a committee of Maryland racing industry members coordinated by the Maryland Horse Breeders Association and Maryland Racing Media Association. They were celebrated on opening day of Timonium's summer meet, Aug. 23, with friends and relatives of the connections in attendance.

Allaire duPont's Shine Again was the last major winner bred by the legendary sportswoman, whose Bohemia Stable raced top-class homebreds for decades.

Robert Meyerhoff-bred Richard's Kid, with family ties to Meyerhoff's lauded Broad Brush, began his career with trainer Dickie Small before being sold and making his fortune on the West Coast.

Dr. Robert Leonard and Glade Valley Farm partner Stanley Bender, in the name of J.I.B. Farms, bred Alma North and sold her as a yearling to Eugene Mori.

Born in 1968, Alma North was a member of Northern Dancer's third crop, out of the Swaps mare Spaws Arrow. Mori, who built and owned Garden State Park, and had controlling interests in tracks nationwide, including Hialeah, purchased her at the Saratoga yearling sale for $15,500, and less than a year later regretted the purchase.

"Eugene Mori was a little disappointed with the way she was developing," said longtime Glade Valley manager and trainer Larry Murray, who arrived at the farm about a decade after Alma North. "Dr. Leonard had told me he bumped into Mori in the spring of her 2-year-old year and he was kind of complaining about her lack of progress. He said she hadn't grown much, and didn't look like a racehorse.

"Doc said, 'If you don't want her I'll give you your money back.' And Mori said, 'No. If you want to give me my money back, I'm going to keep her.' And she turned out to be one hell of a racemare."

Alma North was named 1971 Maryland-bred Horse of the Year after a 3-year-old season in which she made 27 starts and won or placed 19 times–12 in stakes – and ranked as one of the top 3-year-old fillies in the nation. Among her wins was the Cotillion Handicap. She contested the Monmouth Invitational – now known as the Haskell – and finished third behind West Coast Scout, who set a stakes record, with Belmont Stakes winner Pass Catcher and Canadian Horse of the Year Kennedy Road behind her.

Her durability in 1971 won her America's Iron Horse of the Year citation – a selection made by four of the nation's top racing secretaries: Tommy Trotter (NYRA), Kenny Noe (Hialeah, Garden State), Jimmy Kilroe (Santa Anita) and Doc Lavin (Churchill Downs, Keeneland). Racing in the red and white colors of Mori's East Acres, she earned $179,499 of her career total $513,597 that year.

Trained by Frank Zitto, Alma North was a stakes winner on dirt and turf. She made 78 starts in less than four years, won 23, was second 14 times and third in another 18.

Her 15 stakes victories included four graded in 1973, topped by the Matchmaker-G1 at Atlantic City while equaling the track record. Counted among 20 stakes-placings were the Alabama, Spinster and 1972 Matchmaker, in which she was disqualified to third after leading throughout and crossing the wire first, ahead of champion Numbered Account.

Alma North earned Maryland-bred champion honors as older mare in 1972, and had it not been for Twixt in 1973, she would have repeated as Horse of the Year.

"She was the best thing to come off of Glade Valley at that time [during the Bender/Leonard years] and probably is still the best," said Murray. "She was awesome and wound up selling for $1 million."

Richard's Kid, back-to-back winner of the Grade 1 Pacific Classic at Del Mar, started his career on the East Coast for Meyerhoff's Fitzhugh LLC. The bay son of Lemon Drop Kid was named for Small, but it was not exactly a compliment. When Richard's Kid was born in 2005, his female family, which Small had expected to do well, had not measured up to Meyerhoff's standards. Small selected the colt's granddam as a yearling, a daughter of Private Account Meyerhoff named Richard's Choice, who never won. While her first foal Tough Broad (by Meyerhoff's Maryland Thoroughbred Hall of Famer Broad Brush) was a stakes winner, she was failing as a producer.

Richard's Kid, Tough Broad's fourth living foal, seemed to follow in the family footsteps. It took him five starts, from 2 to 3, before he won in Septemer 2008. Milan Milosevic, who worked for Small when Richard's Kid was in the barn, spoke with Maryland Racing Media Association president Frank Vespe at Timonium the day of the ceremony.

"He was just normal and didn't really stand out early on," said Milosevic. "But when he matured as a 3-year-old he started winning left and right and was on a tear." Over a three-month span through February 2009, Richard's Kid made five starts at Laurel and won four, including the John B. Campbell Handicap. He was off the board in his next three starts, all stakes, when an offer was made that was too good to pass up.

"We were talking about going to Presque Isle on the synthetic surface since he was a Lemon Drop Kid, but he was sold and that was it," said Milosevic. "We were sad to see him go."

The distance-loving specialist sold privately to Arnold Zetcher and turned over to Bob Baffert, who guided him through the middle of his 47-start career to not only the Pacific Classic wins, but also victories in the Grade 1 Goodwood, Grade 2 San Antonio and twice in the Cougar II Handicap (once a Grade 3).

After finishing his 2010 season with consecutive Grade 1 triumphs, he was sent to Dubai where he raced for more than a year with trainer Satish Seemar. Upon his return to the United States in spring 2012 he set a track record in his first start at Hollywood Park, and two starts later set a track record at Del Mar.

Richard's Kid sold twice more during his career, to Zabeel Racing in 2010 and eventually to Dave Kenney, Triple B Farms, Westside Rentals.com, et al, midway through the 2012 season, when he was turned over to trainer Doug O'Neill. The last of his dozen wins came for O'Neill, a third Cougar II Handicap-G3 in 2013.

Richard's Kid retired to stud having won eight stakes, six graded, placed in 10 others and earned $2,482,259 – $2,127,015 and seven of his stakes wins came on a synthetic surface. The Maryland-bred Horse of the Year and champion older male in 2009 and 2010, he is the third member of the Hall of Fame bred by Meyerhoff, joining Broad Brush and Concern.

A Maryland-bred champion over three consecutive years, including Horse of the Year in 2003, duPont's fourth-generation homebred Shine Again was one of the most consistent racemares to ever come out of Maryland. When she retired, not only had she finished in the top three in 31 of her 34 starts, she ranked as the ninth-leading Maryland-bred earner of all time, and the second-leading female behind Safely Kept.

Shine Again joins duPont's Politely in the Hall of Fame.

"This wasn't that expected,"said duPont's grandaughter Allaire "Lairsie" duPont. "[The family] has been out of this for a while. . . none of us are really involved in the racing world anymore and it wasn't on our radar.

"It was a nice surprise to have that recognition. My grandmother was so proud of Maryland-breds. She really, really loved her state and loved the Maryland racing program. She had a lots of horses who could run in New York, but when she ran in Maryland it made her very happy."

Trained by Allen Jerkens, Shine Again won Saratoga's Ballerina Handicap-G1 in 2001 and 2002, missing a third win by a nose. The daughter of Wild Again won the First Flight Handicap-G2 those same yeas, and came within a neck of a third consecutive win in 2003.

Named Maryland-bred champion sprinter twice and champion older mare three times, Shine Again won or placed in 20 stakes in her career, 18 graded. She retired after her 6-year-old season in 2003 with earnings of $1,271,840.

"What jumps out at you about all three of this year's inductees is their longevity," said Vespe. "In our era of shortened careers, it's refreshing to see horses that made dozens of starts and competed successfully at the highest level over multiple seasons. In fact, all three won or placed in top-level stakes in at least three different years."

Under the collaboration of the Maryland Horse Breeders Association and Maryland Racing Media Association, the Hall of Fame was initiated in 2013 to celebrate the excellence of state-bred Thoroughbreds and launched with an inaugural class of 12. There are now 36 members. Alma North, Richard's Kid and Shine Again join Awad, Ben's Cat, Broad Brush, Caesar's Wish, Challedon, Cigar, Concern, Conniver, Dave's Friend, Deputed Testamony, Devil's Bag, El Gran Senor, Find, Gallorette, Heavenly Cause, Jameela, J. O. Tobin, Kauai King, Little Bold John, Politely, Safely Kept, Smoke Glacken, Social Outcast, Star de Naskra, Twixt, Vertex, What a Summer and Youth and steeplechasers Elkridge, Good Night Shirt, Jay Trump, Mountain Dew and Tuscalee.

The newest honorees are showcased at mdthoroughbredhalloffame.com. ❧

Jim Raftery

Eugene Mori's Alma North, a daughter of Northern Dancer bred by J.I.B Farms at Glade Valley in Frederick, won on dirt and turf, captured the Grade 1 Matchmaker, was Maryland-bred Horse of the Year in 1971 and just missed a second title in 1973.

Maryland-bred Stakes Winners

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Re Markably cruises to Dover Stakes victory

Re Markably delivered a standout performance in the $50,000 Dover Stakes for Delaware certified 2-year-olds at Delaware Park Aug. 14, winning by 5½ lengths in his third start.

A member of the first Maryland-sired crop of Northview Stallion Station's Hoppertunity, Re Markably showed promise from the outset. He won at first asking in a Delaware waiver maiden claimer July 3 and followed with a third in Colonial Downs' $100,000 Hickory Tree Stakes Aug. 3. Both races were at the Dover's 5½-furlong distance.

The 1.70-1 Dover favorite in an evenly matched field of four, Re Markably broke cleanly from the gate under John Hiraldo, vied for the lead to the outside of Maryland-bred Kerness K off an opening quarter of :22.41, took over around the turn and drew off to win in 1:05.17. It was a Maryland-bred sweep as All the Hardways got up for second over Kerness K.

A homebred for trainer Lynn Ashby, who co-bred/co-owns the colt with William Gotwals, Re Markably is the second stakes winner out of A Dicey Dame, an 11-year-old daughter of Colonel John who made one start with Gotwals and Ashby. The mare's second foal, a Pennsylvania-bred son of Madefromlucky named Epic Luck, has won five times in 34 starts, including Colonial's Kitten's Joy Stakes in 2021. Re Markably, the mare's fourth foal, returned Sept. 11 and rallied for second behind It's Hammertime in the First State Dash Stakes at Delaware Park.

A Dicey Dame produced a Maryland-bred daughter of Accelerate in 2023 who died that year. She was bred to Knicks Go for 2025. ❧

Future Is Now adds Smart and Fancy Stakes to resume

The 4-year-old filly Future Is Now, R. Larry Johnson's Grade 2-winning homebred, added a third stakes win to her 2024 campaign with a victory in the $150,000 Smart and Fancy at Saratoga Race Course Aug. 23.

Walter Wlodarczyk / Coglianese

Trained by Mike Trombetta, Future Is Now fought down the stretch of the 5½-furlong turf race, having lost the lead to Star Guest (GB) in midstretch, and survived an inquiry to register a half-length victory.

Facing four rivals, including multiple graded stakes winner and 4-5 favorite Roses for Debra, Future Is Now pressed the pace to the outside of longshot Lady Milagro through an opening quarter-mile in :21.62. After a half in :45.30, Future Is Now took the lead and was joined by Star Guest as they battled down the stretch.

Future Is Now covered the distance over the firm course in 1:03.19. In her prior start, she was beaten a half-length when third in a blanket finish in the 5½-furlong Grade 3 Caress July 25 at Saratoga, where she was hustled to the lead from an inside post at the break, posted fractions of :21.49, :43.82 and :55.39, and fought to the wire after Paco Lopez had his crop knocked from his hand 70 yards from the finish. The final time in that race was 1:01.39. Lopez has been aboard Future Is Now for four straight races, three wins and a third. He also guided her this year to victories in Saratoga's Grade 2 Intercontinental Stakes in June and Pimlico's The Very One Stakes in May.

A daughter of leading Mid-Atlantic sire Great Notion, Future Is Now has six wins, one second and one third and $431,435 in earnings from 13 starts.

Future Is Now descends from Johnson's foundation mare Ran's Chick, purchased at auction for $2,400 in December 1978. Future Is Now's dam, the Bernardini mare Past as Prelude, is a half-sibling to six winners, including stakes winner and sire Street Magician. The family includes this year's Belmont Stakes-G1 and Haskell-G1 runner-up Mindframe.

Past as Prelude has produced five starters from six foals – her three winners are all stakes performers and also include 3-year-old Call Another Play (Audible), winner of the Weber City Miss in April, third in the Black-Eyed Susan Stakes-G3 in May, and most recently second in the Searching Stakes at Laurel Aug. 4, and stakes-placed Continentalcongres, a 5-year-old Virginia-bred daughter of Constitution with earnings of $310,800. The mare has a McKinzie 2-year-old colt named Places in My Past, who has been working at Fair Hill, and delivered a full-sister to Call Another Play in April before being bred back to Charlatan. ❧

It's Hammertime wins First State

It's Hammertime made his second knockout performance in two starts when taking Delaware Park's $100,000 First State Dash for Delaware-bred or -certified 2-year-olds Sept. 11.

Racing for Eagle Up Stables, London Reid Thoroughbreds and Non Stop Stable, It's Hammertime led gate-to-wire, pulling clear under a hand ride to score by 5 lengths over Re Markably. The son of Vekoma covered 6 furlongs in 1:12.24. It was a Maryland-bred triple as Kerness K rallied for third.

Co-breeder/co-owner and trainer Gary Capuano unveiled the chestnut colt June 5 at Delaware in a 5-furlong maiden special weight. Sent off as favorite and quickest from the gate, he lost ground down the backstretch then blasted clear in the stretch by 8 lengths.

"He is a nice horse and a real pleasure to have in the barn," said Capuano, who has trained three generations of the family. "We have always been high on him, but we got more excited after the way he broke his maiden here. He beat a real nice horse in Re Markably, so we are excited to see where he can take us."

Now an earner of $90,000, It's Hammertime was bred by ZWP Stable and Non Stop Stable, and is the second stakes performer for homebred mare Steady N Love (by Not For Love), following 2021 Private Terms Stakes winner Shackled Love. The mare has produced five foals of racing age, four win-

Hoofprints, Inc

ners, including three six-figure earners. The mare's 3-year-old Bolt d'Oro son Pappy's Revenge won a Delaware allowance the week before the First State Dash and has been on the board in seven of his 12 starts.

Steady N Love won or placed in five stakes over three seasons, counting a win in the 2014 Caesar's Wish while earning $241,305. Her dam, the Malibu Moon mare Slow and Steady, was a $14,500 yearling purchase by Capuano and raced for ZWP. She won or placed in 14 of her 20 starts and earned $123,510.

As a broodmare, Slow and Steady has 11 winners from 11 starters, including Maryland-bred champion Steady Warrior (by ZWP Stable bred and owned and Capuano-trained two-time Maryland-bred champion and Horse of the Year Cherokee's Boy), multiple stakes-placed Lucky in Malibu, Hanky Doodle and Who Dat Boy, and stakes-placed Fast Tracked. Her richest earner, with $744,699, is daughter Malibu Beauty, a six-time stakes winner with back-to-back scores in the All Brandy and Caesar's Wish this August.

Steady N Love has delivered on May 2 the past two years to the cover of Game Winner – a colt in 2023 and a filly this year. The 13-year-old mare was bred back to Mandaloun for 2025. ❧

Maryland Fund Stakes Recaps

Jim McCue

Riccio

Find Stakes
$75,000-guaranteed, 1 mi.
(off turf), registered Maryland-bred or sired, 3 & up. Laurel Park, Aug. 18.

Dk.b./br.g., 2020, Cross Traffic—Richetta, by Polish Numbers. Bred by Glenangus Farm LLC; owned by Sterling Road Stables and LBR Racing Stable; trained by Richard P. Sillaman. Foaled at Roland Farm, Chesapeake City, Md.

		Lifetime		
starts	*1st*	*2nd*	*3rd*	*earnings*
21	5 (1)	3 (1)	7 (2)	$269,438

(through Aug. 18)

2022: 2nd **Dover S**; 3rd **Rocky Run S**, **Heft S**. **2024:** 1st $75,000 **Find S**, 1 mi. (off turf), registered Md.-bred or sired, 3 & up, Laurel, Aug. 18.

Sterling Road Stables and LBR Racing Stable's Riccio emerged victorious in the $75,000 Find Stakes for Maryland-bred or -sired runners at Laurel Park Aug. 18, securing his first stakes win by 9 lengths. The 4-year-old gelding, trained by Richard Sillaman and ridden by Daniel Centeno, completed 1 mile over a fast main track in 1:38.79.

Scheduled for the turf, the Find was moved due to overnight rain, a switch that worked to Riccio's advantage. The second-longest shot in the five-horse field at 7-1, Riccio tracked in third before making a move around the turn to take the lead. He accelerated down the stretch under a hand ride.

The son of Cross Traffic has shown versatility on dirt and turf. In eight starts at 2, Riccio placed six times, all on the main track, three in stakes when second in the Dover and third in the Rocky Run at Delaware Park and third in the Heft at Laurel. After two off-the-board stakes tries early at 3, he would not start in stakes company for 17 months until the Find. During that time he found success on the turf, finishing third or better in seven of his last nine starts over the surface.

His Find win pushed his record to 21-5-3-7, with earnings of $269,438.

Bred by Glenangus Farm, Riccio sold for $15,000 out of the Becky Davis consignment at the Fasig-Tipton Midlantic fall yearling sale in 2021. He is a son of Polish Numbers' stakes-winning daughter Richetta, Maryland-bred champion 2-year-old filly of 2003 when she won the Maryland Million Lassie, Heavenly Cause and Selima stakes.

Richetta retired with four stakes wins and earned $296,848 for Higgins and Bowman Stable. Richetta's breeding career has been with the Bowmans since producing her first foal in 2007. Bowmans and Higgins Stable bred her first six foals, including stakes winner Concealed Identity, winner of the 2011 Find Stakes and a stakes winner at 2, 3 and 5 while earning $461,140.

Jim Dresher has bred her foals since 2014, all foaling with the Bowmans on Maryland's Eastern Shore. The first, Cu Rahy (by Curlin), sold as a yearling in 2015 for $120,000 and was a multiple stakes-placed earner of $122,794. The next, the filly Peach of a Gal, also by Curlin, was a stakes winner of $101,155 and remains a member of the Glenangus Farm broodmare band. She is the dam of the first Maryland-bred stakes-winning 2-year-old this year, Studlydoright, winner of the Tremont, second in the Grade 3 Sanford at Saratoga, and an earner of $152,180.

All six foals bred by Dresher out of Richetta to race have won. Her last reported foal is the 3-year-old filly Song Time (by Collected) who is working at WinStar Training Center in Versailles, Ky. ❧

Malibu Beauty

All Brandy Stakes
$75,000-guaranteed, 1 mi.
(off turf), registered Maryland-bred or sired fillies and mares, 3 & up.
Laurel Park, Aug. 18.

B.m., 2018, Buffum—Slow and Steady, by Malibu Moon. Bred and owned by ZWP Stable Inc. and Non Stop Stable; trained by Gary A. Capuano. Foaled at Summer Wind Farm, Libertytown, Md.

					Lifetime
starts	*1st*	*2nd*	*3rd*	*earnings*	
38	12 (6)	9 (6)	5 (2)	$738,699	(through Aug. 18)

2021: 1st $75,000 **Miss Disco S**, 6 fur., registered Md.-bred or sired 3-year-old fillies, Pimlico, Aug. 21; 2nd **Maryland Million Distaff S**, **Tax Free Shopping Distaff S**, **Stormy Blues S**. **2022:** 1st $50,000 **Peach Blossom S**, 1 mi. (off turf), Del.-bred or certified fillies and mares, 3 & up, Delaware, July 6; $100,000 **George Rosenberger Memorial S**, 1⅛ mi. (off turf), fillies and mares, 3 & up, who had started at Delaware Park in 2022, Delaware, Oct. 1; $100,000 **Carousel S**, 1⅛ mi., fillies and mares, 3 & up, Laurel, Dec. 30; 2nd **Maryland Million Distaff S**, **Timonium Distaff S**. **2023:** 2nd **Timonium Distaff S**; 3rd **Geisha S**, **Twixt S**. **2024:** 1st $100,000 **Caesar's Wish S**, 1⅛ mi., fillies and mares, 3 & up, Laurel, Aug. 4; $75,000 **All Brandy S**, 1 mi. (off turf), registered Md.-bred or sired fillies and mares, 3 & up, Laurel, Aug. 18.

ZWP Stable and Non Stop Stable's homebred Malibu Beauty continued her streak of dominance in the $75,000 All Brandy Stakes at Laurel Park Aug. 18. It was her second stakes win in two weeks, coming off a daylight victory in the Caesar's Wish Aug. 4 at Laurel.

The All Brandy for Maryland-bred fillies and mares was originally scheduled for 1⅛ miles on the turf. When it was moved off the grass, the race lost a number entrants and gained Malibu Beauty, entered by trainer Gary Capuano for the main track. Sent off as the 9-10 favorite in the field of six going 1 mile over a fast track, she broke sharply and settled into second behind Gold Digging Broad, who set the early pace, getting the opening quarter in :23.74. By the time they got through a half-mile in :46.83, J.G. Torrealba had Malibu Beauty on the lead and opening up by 3 lengths. Gold Digging Broad, winner of the race last year, closed the gap, coming up three-quarters of a length short. Malibu Beauty stopped the clock in 1:38.83.

The victory marked Malibu Beauty's third consecutive win, and a sixth win in a stakes. The 6-year-old daughter of the late Northview Stallion Station sire Buffum has won 12 races lifetime from 38 career starts while earning $738,699.

Malibu Beauty is one of 11 winners from as many starters for the 23-year-old Malibu Moon mare Slow and Steady, seven of them stakes performers. Others include 2010 Maryland-bred juvenile champion Steady Warrior (Cherokee's Boy), stakes winner Steady N Love (Not For Love) and stakes-placed Lucky in Malibu (Lookin At Lucky), Hanky Doodle (Cherokee's Boy), Who Dat Boy (Cherokee's Boy) and Fast Tracked (Cross Traffic). Steady N Love is the dam of ZWP Stable and Non Stop Stable's stakes winner Shackled Love and current 2-year-old It's Hammertime (by Vekoma), winner of Delaware Park's First State Dash Stakes Sept. 11 to remain undefeated in two starts.

Slow and Steady produced a filly by Great Notion in 2023 and delivered a colt by Game Winner this May. ❧

October is Horse Month in Maryland!

Maryland's horse industry is center stage locally and internationally!

The Capital Challenge Horse Show
September 26 - October 6, 2024 Prince George's Equestrian Center
capitalchallenge.org

Celebration of the Horse
Oct 5, 2024 Tuckahoe Equestrian Center
tuckahoeequestriancenter.com

State/National Jousting Championships
State Oct, 5, 2024 Crownsville, National Oct. 12, 2024 Knoxville
marylandjousting.com

Jim McKay Maryland Million Day
Oct. 12, 2024 Laurel Park
marylandmillion.com

MARS Maryland 5 Star at Fair Hill
Oct. 17-20, 2024 Fair Hill
maryland5star.us

Washington International Horse Show
Oct 21-27, 2024 Prince George's Equestrian Center
wihs.org

Horse Discovery Centers
Want to meet a horse? Contact the HDC closest to you!
MDA.maryland.gov/horseboard/Pages/horse_board.aspx

MarylandHorse.com/maryland-horse-month

– In memoriam –

Wayne Harrison

Wayne Alan Harrison, active in Maryland Thoroughbred racing and breeding for many years, passed away Aug. 7 surrounded by his family and friends. He was 75.

The resident of Rockville, Md., and native of Montgomery County attended Churchill High in Potomac and later graduated from Greenbrier Military Academy in West Virginia. He then went on to graduate from West Virginia Wesleyan College in 1974.

After graduating, Harrison returned to the Washington, D.C., area to work for HT Harrison and Sons roofing company, at the time owned by his father, W.T. Harrison, and his uncles. He would later go on to run the company as its CEO.

Harrison owned several Maryland-bred stakes winners in partnership with Katy Voss and the late Robert Manfuso, including Corvus, who won the Maryland Million Nursery in 2015; Las Setas, who captured the Wide Country Stakes, Beyond the Wire Stakes and Weber City Miss Stakes in 2016; and Saratoga Bob, victorious in the 2018 Maryland Million Classic. All three were bred by Manfuso and Voss with Voss also the trainer.

Harrison also owned 1995 Maryland Million Classic winner Brilliant Patriot in partnership with Lawrence Pomerantz.

"His highlights were winning the Maryland Million Classic," Voss said. "He was good friends with jockey Edgar Prado, and was very excited when he rode Saratoga Bob in the Classic. Wayne used to come out to the farm and he would come to Saratoga when we were up there. His friends and family were all involved."

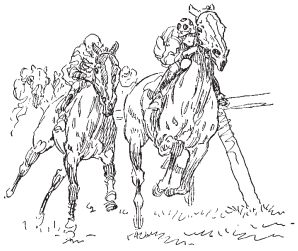
Harrison also served as president of Maryland Million Ltd. for several years and was president of the Charles Town Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association for a brief period during a transition. Harrison also served on the board of directors for the Capital Bank of Maryland as chairman of the Loan Committee, and Voss said he was instrumental in the bank serving as a Maryland Million sponsor.

Harrison was an active member in the Washington Rugby Club and the rugby community. He spent many years playing for and coaching various teams across the region. One of the highlights of his rugby career was coaching the University of Maryland women's team, which played in the NCAA national tournament while he served as the backs' coach.

Lydia A. Williams

Wayne Harrison in the 2018 winner's circle with Edgar Prado after Saratoga Bob's Maryland Million Classic win.

Harrison is survived by his wife of 43 years, Capri Harrison, and the couple's three children, Travis, Crystal and Tiffany. ❧



Maryland Fund Report

Bonuses paid for races run
in May 2024 at Maryland tracks

Breeder bonuses

Includes the additional 10 percent Maryland-sired bonus for winners of maiden races, initiated Jan. 1 during the 2022 Laurel winter meet. That bonus is reflected in the second figure earned for the race.

Anchor and Hope Farm Inc.—Vance Scholars: May 27, 8th race, $2,520. Winked: May 25, 6th race, $6,615. ($9,135)

Anchor and Hope Farm Inc. and Copper Penny Stables—Angel Art: May 12, 6th race, $6,615. Skylar's Brother: May 11, 5th race, $810. ($7,425)

Barak Farm—Always Forward: May 5, 7th race, $495; May 24, 3rd race, $495. Hateful: May 9, 6th race, $1,485. Rapido Rosa: May 4, 4th race, $1,057.50; May 27, 4th race, $6,345/$2,115. Safe Trust: May 4, 4th race, $2,115. ($14,107.50)

Barak Farm and Dinos Thoroughbreds LLC—Isabella's Glory: May 16, 3rd race, $652.50. Skip Thru Da Fire: May 3, 5th race, $495. Thunder in Paris: May 25, 3rd race, $2,115. Trash Talkin Larry: May 24, 7th race, $3,240. ($6,502.50)

William Bayne and Super C Racing—Champagne Dance: May 3, 3rd race, $2,970/ $990. ($3,960)

Joseph Besecker—Kilo Road: May 3, 8th race, $5,535; May 16, 4th race, $6,615. ($12,150)

Big Lick Farm and Erin Atkiss—La Befana: May 31, 5th race, $585.

Charles Blanford—Go Sherry Go: May 11, 8th race, $2,205. Momma's Lino: May 31, 1st race, $1,170. ($3,375)

David Benjamin Bloom—Easter Sunday Girl: May 27, 2nd race, $1,485.

Richard F. Blue Jr.—The Last Scip: May 24, 6th race, $3,240.

Bonita Farm—Hittheroadjak: May 31, 8th race, $1,080. Juniper Juice: May 27, 2nd race, $4,455/$1,485. ($7,020)

Phyllis M. Browne—Golden Heart: May 16, 7th race, $1,102.50.

Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Bowman—Blue Kingdom: May 9, 5th race, $1,057.50. Chelichna: May 17, 7th race, $2,610. Find Faith: May 5, 8th race, $742.50. Gabriel Seven: May 12, 1st race, $990. Right Quick: May 31, 2nd race, $990. ($6,390)

Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Bowman and Dr. Brooke Bowman—Feelin So Lucky: May 10, 5th race, $1,485. Whatsyourbigidea: May 9, 8th race, $1,485. ($2,970)

Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Bowman and Rick Buckley—Open the Books: May 3, 1st race, $990.

Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Bowman and Shawn M. Howser—Bourbon Wildcat: May 16, 6th race, $1,192.50

Bowman and Higgins Stable—K Kake Pop: May 10, 7th race, $4,860. Master of None: May 10, 3rd race, $1,485. ($6,345)

William Andrew Campbell—Bad Temper: May 4, 9th race, $540.

Dennis A. Cardoza—Captain Cardo: May 9, 3rd race, $540.

Wes Carter—Had to Have Him: May 17, 2nd race, $7,290.

Clover Hill Racing LLC—Super Needy: May 31, 2nd race, $2,970/$990. ($3,960)

Susan S. Cooney—Meliponini Bee: May 3, 2nd race, $1,170.

Country Life Farm, Paul Berube and Karen Linnell—Touisset: May 31, 6th race, $1,080.

Country Life Farm and Fleet and Fancy LLC—Next Girl: May 10, 9th race, $3,510.

Country Life Farm and Huron Racing Ventures LLC—Sir Mick: May 5, 1st race, $2,115.

Country Life Farm, Sue Ann Mancilla and Susan Scheffres—Divine Child: May 11, 6th race, $922.50.

Country Life Farm and Mrs. J.W.Y. Martin Jr.—Mr. Mox: May 5, 3rd race, $348.75.

Country Life Farm and Starr of Quality LLC—Fulmineo: May 18, 9th race, $13,500.

Country Roads Ltd.—My Flicker: May 25, 9th race, $2,520.

Dark Hollow Farm—Circle Home: May 16, 7th race, $2,205. Haleigh B: May 10, 6th race, $832.50. Maryland Moon: May 12, 8th race, $1,170. Pudd'n N Pie: May 4, 3rd race, $4,455. ($8,662.50)

Designated Hitters Racing—Omar Comin: May 12, 5th race, $2,970.

George L. Doetsch—Goldrush Hottie: May 9, 8th race, $742.50.

Hassan Elamri—Golden Can: May 16, 1st race, $540.

Annette Eubanks and Daniel Eubanks—Band Camp: May 31, 8th race, $6,480. Hot Lookin Royal: May 27, 1st race, $697.50. ($7,177.50)

Fitzhugh LLC—Matta: May 17, 4th race, $1,305.

Flying H Stables LLC—Conceptualize: May 18, 5th race, $7,020.

Robert E. Gamber—I Can Do It: May 9, 8th race, $4,455.

Glenangus Farm LLC—Starlifter: May 24, 4th race, $922.50. Studlydoright: May 5, 1st race, $6,345. ($7,267.50)
Sergio Gomez—Lunita: May 9, 1st race, $697.50.
Richard J. Hackerman—Krone: May 25, 8th race, $5,535.
Nancy Haigley—Box of Rockets: May 11, 5th race, $1,620.
Maria M. Haire—Get Like Mike: May 12, 1st race, $495.
Kyle Horlacher—Crabs N Beer: May 18, 12th race, $4,500.
Michael and Debbie Horning—Cut From Class: May 10, 8th race, $6,480.
Horseshoe Valley Equine Center LLC—Any Fools Gold: May 25, 5th race, $990.
Jagger Inc.—Guaponess: May 4, 5th race, $495; May 25, 2nd race, $3,510. Paco the Taco Man: May 5, 4th race, $4,455. Rowsie Express: May 12, 7th race, $2,205. ($10,665)
Jagger Inc. and Super C Racing Inc.—Derbyness: May 12, 3rd race, $2,205.
R. Larry Johnson—Active: May 3, 7th race, $1,845. Call Another Play: May 17, 13th race, $2,250. Clouds of White: May 25, 4th race, $3,510. Come Rain Or Shine: May 24, 4th race, $1,845. Energy Efficient: May 9, 7th race, $1,080. Future Is Now: May 17, 11th race, $13,500. Hollywood Walk: May 17, 11th race, $2,250. Quit Quay: May 4, 10th race, $2,970/$990; May 25, 1st race, $990. Zip Line to Heaven: May 31, 3rd race, $3,240. ($34,470)
Karmac Stables LLC—Frosty Maya: May 11, 2nd race, $1,170.
Kelly Racing LLC—Magic in the Park: May 25, 8th race, $922.50.
Komlo LLC—Upsidedown Man: May 26, 4th race, $742.50.
Joanne P. Krishack—Commanding General: May 9, 2nd race, $3,240.
Lady Olivia at North Cliff LLC—Buckin' Dreamer: May 5, 6th race, $742.50.
Carl Lanier—Box N Ben: May 10, 1st race, $585; May 24, 1st race, $990. Freeze the Fire: May 26, 5th race, $4,455. Mosler Time: May 9, 7th race, $6,480. ($12,510)
Leaf Stable—Laddie Dance: May 18, 1st race, $1,170.
Little Man Farm—Beltane: May 18, 1st race, $2,340. Tidewater: May 17, 2nd race, $2,430. ($4,770)
Cal Lynch, Dr. Tom Keenan and Spendthrift Farm—Under the Overpass: May 25, 10th race, $990.
Estate of Robert T. Manfuso—Catch the Kitten: May 10, 9th race, $585; May 31, 1st race, $3,510. Imaginetheodds: May 3, 7th race, $5,535/ $1,845. ($11,475)
Marathon Farm Inc.—Abuelo Paps: May 24, 8th race, $585.
Helen C. Marshall—Take Charge Too: May 17, 5th race, $1,305. The Big Enchilada: May 4, 7th race, $1,485. ($2,790)
Mary E. Eppler Racing Stable—Paperback Edition: May 27, 6th race, $990.
Maryland Mare Venture LLC—Ellie Victorina: May 9, 1st race, $2,092.50.
Peter D. Mattson—Minny Speightster: May 25, 10th race, $495.
MCA Racing Stable LLC—A B C Ya: May 26, 1st race, $990.
Ann Warfield Merryman and Richard F. Blue Jr.—Gift of Gab: May 25, 4th race, $1,170.
Elizabeth M. Merryman—Spencer Tiara: May 26, 3rd race, $2,115.
Mikelle Farm and Marilyn Morales—Missy Boss: May 16, 8th race, $2,970.
Bryan B. Minnich—King's River: May 11, 6th race, $5,535.
Murmur Farm—Bonded: May 24, 6th race, $540. Golden Charm: May 10, 8th race, $2,160; May 31, 6th race, $6,480. Mister Agent: May 24, 5th race, $1,485. ($10,665)
No Guts No Glory Farm—Bandits Warrior: May 16, 1st race, $3,240. Banditsgoldenchild: May 11, 6th race, $1,845. G's Fireball: May 16, 8th race, $990. General J R: May 3, 10th race, $990. Irish Bandit: May 5, 4th race, $742.50. Irish Hero: May 17, 3rd race, $5,940/$1,980. Mama G's Wish: May 10, 6th race, $4,995. ($20,722.50)
Northwoods Stable—Mission North: May 17, 6th race, $1,170.
Clarke Ohrstrom—Burroughs Cay: May 27, 9th race, $1,485. Invective: May 25, 2nd race, $585. Jardani: May 9, 7th race, $2,160. ($4,230)
David W. Palmer—Preparefortakeoff: May 27, 1st race, $2,092.50.
Frank A. Perri Jr.—Peachessweetnotion: May 25, 5th race, $495.
Dr. and Mrs. A. Leonard Pineau—Brysons Option: May 26, 7th race, $495.
Joel Politi—Biscuitwiththeboss: May 4, 4th race, $6,345/$2,115. ($8,460)
Cynthia K. Rickman—Casino Tricks: May 5, 2nd race, $742.50.
Dr. and Mrs. William E. Riddle Jr.—Tubtimsiam: May 11, 4th race, $1,485; May 26, 7th race, $2,970. ($4,455)
Randy Ridgely and Gary Ridgely—Fun Notion: May 17, 2nd race, $1,215.
Roland Farm—Shirley Knot: May 27, 6th race, $495.
Rolling Meadows Farm—Brooklyn Girl: May 10, 8th race, $1,080. Summerstateofmind: May 11, 5th race, $4,860/$1,620. Sweeterthanwhiskey: May 9, 6th race, $742.50. ($8,302.50)
Timothy J. Rooney—Dark Pool: May 3, 7th race, $922.50. Pietrelcina: May 26, 6th race, $1,485. ($2,407.50)
Shamrock Farm—Albertano: May 3, 6th race, $697.50. Sue Loves Barbados: May 31, 3rd race, $540. ($1,237.50)
Franklin G. Smith Sr.—Porch Swing: May 3, 6th race, $348.75.
Sugarland LLC Equine Etiquette—Lady Lemoncello: May 3, 8th race, $922.50.
Super C Racing Inc.—Dance for Green: May 3, 1st race, $2,970; May 24, 5th race, $4,455. ($7,425)
Sycamore Hall Thoroughbreds LLC—Addy's Laddy T N T: May 9, 3rd race, $1,080. Dulce Kiara: May 3, 9th race, $1,305. Formal Affair: May 10, 4th race, $922.50. Frightland: May 18, 14th race, $1,305. Goodafternoonoscar: May 17, 1st race, $2,430. John Hall: May 5, 2nd race, $4,455. Northern Glow: May 12, 7th race, $6,615. ($18,112.50)
Sycamore Hall Thoroughbreds LLC and Ellen Charles—Closertotheheart: May 5, 5th race, $495; May 25, 1st race, $2,970. Society Ball: May 31, 6th race, $2,160. ($5,625)
James F. Thames—Irish Warlock: May 5, 8th race, $1,485.
The Elkstone Group LLC—Brady Bear: May 26, 2nd race, $3,510. It's Viper: May 18, 14th race, $2,610. Order Ofthe Kettle: May 31, 4th race, $540. The Addison Pour: May 17, 14th race, $2,610. ($9,270)
Thomas L. Teal—Rad Paisley: May 9, 3rd race, $3,240; May 31, 4th race, $3,240. ($6,480)
Thornmar Farm LLC—Forgotten Gift: May 5, 5th race, $2,970. Just the Thing: May 3, 3rd race, $495; May 27, 6th race, $2,970. Just the Thing: May 27, 6th race, $990. Something Silly: May 16, 8th race, $495. Up in Flames: May 27, 4th race, $2,115. ($10,035)
2500 Determined Holdings—Overly Dramatic: May 16, 4th race, $2,205.
Walter N. Vieser II—Spirit and Truth: May 3, 8th race, $1,845.
Katharine Merryman Voss—Longworth: May 4, 2nd race, $1,485.
David H. Wade—Rominski: May 25, 7th race, $7,560.
Maureen Wade—Honor the Truth: May 12, 7th race, $1,102.50.
Wasabi Ventures Stables LLC, Stephen Crayne, Connie S. Black, Clarence M. Diehl, Larry Davis, et al.—Oneofthegoodguys: May 31, 8th race, $2,160.
John E. Williamson III—Mysisternancy: May 3, 4th race, $2,092.50.
WWCD LLC—Mattitude: May 10, 6th race, $1,665.

Maryland-bred top earners in 2024

(through September 16)

1. Post Time	$745,000	11. Golden Charm	$154,550
2. Mindframe	647,360	12. Play Harder	153,055
3. Future Is Now	343,430	13. Studlydoright	152,180
4. Jaxon Traveler	281,799	14. Had to Have Him	138,400
5. Call Another Play	213,815	15. Arden'sluckytobe	133,300
6. Rominski	198,390	16. Crabs N Beer	133,130
7. Fulmineo	193,095	17. Pappy's Revenge	132,097
8. Malibu Beauty	181,865	18. Speedyness	129,810
9. Band Camp	163,390	19. Freeze the Fire	121,290
10. Miss Harriett	157,310	20. King's River	119,830

Stallion bonuses

BANDBOX (Band Camp: May 31, 8th race, $2,160. Box of Rockets: May 11, 5th race, $540. Box N Ben: May 10, 1st race, $195; May 24, 1st race, $330. Dulce Kiara: May 3, 9th race, $435. Forgotten Gift: May 5, 5th race, $990. Paco the Taco Man: May 5, 4th race, $1,485): Northview Stallion Station—$6,135.
BARBADOS (Albertano: May 3, 6th race, $232.50. Hateful: May 9, 6th race, $495. Sue Loves Barbados: May 31, 3rd race, $180): Shamrock Farm—$907.50.
BLOFELD (Bonded: May 24, 6th race, $180. Brooklyn Girl: May 10, 8th race, $360. Crabs N Beer: May 18, 12th race, $1,500. Golden Charm: May 10, 8th race, $720; May 31, 6th race, $2,160. Mister Agent: May 24, 5th race, $495): Blofeld Syndicate—$5,415.
BOURBON COURAGE (Bourbon Wildcat: May 16, 6th race, $397.50. G's Fireball: May 16, 8th race, $330. Skylar's Brother: May 11, 5th race, $270. Sweeterthanwhiskey: May 9, 6th race, $247.50): Bourbon Courage Syndicate—$1,245.
BUFFUM (Commanding General: May 9, 2nd race, $1,080): Buffum Syndicate.
DIVINING ROD (Champagne Dance: May 3, 3rd race, $990. Divine Child: May 11, 6th race, $307.50. Find Faith: May 5, 8th race, $247.50. Mr. Mox: May 5, 3rd race, $116.25. Next Girl: May 10, 9th race, $1,170): Divining Rod Syndicate—$2,831.25.
EDITORIAL (Right Quick: May 31, 2nd race, $330): Climax Stallions LLC.
FIRST MONDAYS (Blue Kingdom: May 9, 5th race, $352.50. Starlifter: May 24, 4th race, $307.50): First Mondays Partnership—$660.
FORCE THE PASS (Had to Have Him: May 17, 2nd race, $2,430): Wasabi Ventures Stables LLC.
FRIESAN FIRE (Freeze the Fire: May 26, 5th race, $1,485. Hot Lookin Royal: May 27, 1st race, $232.50. Skip Thru Da Fire: May 3, 5th race, $165. Up in Flames: May 27, 4th race, $705): Friesan Fire Syndicate—$2,587.50.
GOLDEN LAD (Addy's Laddy T N T: May 9, 3rd race, $360. Any Fools Gold: May 25, 5th race, $330. Banditsgoldenchild: May 11, 6th race, $615. Casino Tricks: May 5, 2nd race, $247.50. Go Sherry Go: May 11, 8th race, $735. Golden Can: May 16, 1st race, $180. Golden Heart: May 16, 7th race, $367.50. Goldrush Hottie: May 9, 8th race, $247.50. Just the Thing: May 3, 3rd race, $165; May 27, 6th race, $990. Laddie Dance: May 18, 1st race, $390. Lunita: May 9, 1st race, $232.50. Omar Comin: May 12, 5th race, $990. Quit Quay: May 4, 10th race, $990; May 25, 1st race, $330. Rowsie Express: May 12, 7th race, $735. Spencer Tiara: May 26, 3rd race, $705. The Big Enchilada: May 4, 7th race, $495): Golden Lad Syndicate—$9,105.
GREAT NOTION (Closertotheheart: May 5, 5th race, $165; May 25, 1st race, $990. Fun Notion: May 17, 2nd race, $405. Future Is Now: May 17, 11th race, $4,500. Mattitude: May 10, 6th race, $555. Meliponini Bee: May 3, 2nd race, $390. My Flicker: May 25, 9th race, $840. Peachessweetnotion: May 25, 5th race, $165. Rominski: May 25, 7th race, $2,520. Shirley Knot: May 27, 6th race, $165. Society Ball: May 31, 6th race, $720. Upsidedown Man: May 26, 4th race, $247.50. Whatsyourbigidea: May 9, 8th race, $495): Great Notion Syndicate—$12,157.50.
HOLY BOSS (Biscuitwiththeboss: May 4, 4th race, $2,115. Burroughs Cay: May 27, 9th race, $495. Easter Sunday Girl: May 27, 2nd race, $495. General J R: May 3, 10th race, $330. Invective: May 25, 2nd race, $195. Jardani: May 9, 7th race, $720. Missy Boss: May 16, 8th race, $990. Vance Scholars: May 27, 8th race, $840): Anchor and Hope Farm for Holy Boss Syndicate—$6,180.
IMAGINING (Angel Art: May 12, 6th race, $2,205. Buckin' Dreamer: May 5, 6th race, $247.50. Imaginetheodds: May 3, 7th race, $1,845. Summerstateofmind: May 11, 5th race, $1,620. Winked: May 25, 6th race, $2,205): Imagining Syndicate—$8,122.50.
IRISH WAR CRY (Dance for Green: May 3, 1st race, $990; May 24, 5th race, $1,485. Irish Bandit: May 5, 4th race, $247.50. Irish Hero: May 17, 3rd race, $1,980. Irish Warlock: May 5, 8th race, $495. King's River: May 11, 6th race, $1,845. Porch Swing: May 3, 6th race, $116.25): Northview Stallion Station Inc.—$7,158.75.
KOBE'S BACK (Hittheroadjak: May 31, 8th race, $360. Juniper Juice: May 27, 2nd race, $1,485. Trash Talkin Larry: May 24, 7th race, $1,080): Bonita Farm—$2,925.
MADEFROMLUCKY (Feelin So Lucky: May 10, 5th race, $495): Madefromlucky Syndicate.
MOSLER (Bandits Warrior: May 16, 1st race, $1,080. Mosler Time: May 9, 7th race, $2,160. Mysisternancy: May 3, 4th race, $697.50. Rapido Rosa: May 4, 4th race, $352.50; May 27, 4th race, $2,115. Safe Trust: May 4, 4th race, $705. Touisset: May 31, 6th race, $360): Mosler Syndicate—$7,470.
OUTFLANKER (Beltane: May 18, 1st race, $780. Mama G's Wish: May 10, 6th race, $1,665. Tidewater: May 17, 2nd race, $810): Outflanker Syndicate—$3,255.
SCIPION (The Last Scip: May 24, 6th race, $1,080): Audrey Murray for Scipion Syndicate.
SEVILLE (GER) (Chelichna: May 17, 7th race, $870): Seville Syndicate.
STREET MAGICIAN (Clouds of White: May 25, 4th race, $1,170. Gabriel Seven: May 12, 1st race, $330. Magic in the Park: May 25, 8th race, $307.50): R. Larry Johnson—$1,807.50.
SUPER NINETY NINE (Bad Temper: May 4, 9th race, $180. Paperback Edition: May 27, 6th race, $330. Super Needy: May 31, 2nd race, $990): Country Life Farm—$1,500.

THE THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY NEWSLETTER

Post Time

- News, views and insights that matter to breeders, owners and racing industry professionals - **October 2024** -

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2025 Board of Trustees Nominating Committee

The nominating committee of the Thoroughbred Breeders' Association of New Jersey invites members of the Association to submit nominations for consideration in developing its slate of nominees for the 2025 Board of Trustees. The committee is accepting candidates for President and six members to serve on the Board of Trustees. Please read section 4.2 of the TBA bylaws below to determine if you are eligible to serve on the Board.

Trustees must be residents of the State of New Jersey and breeder members of the TBANJ in good standing who have made payment of their dues on or before May 1 of the year in which they are nominated to election to the board.

Incumbent and prospective members of the Board of Trustees, including the President, must have their current membership dues paid on or before May 1 and own controlling interest (more than 50 percent) in at least one broodmare or stallion domiciled in the State of New Jersey. That broodmare must have a registered New Jersey-bred foal or be pronounced in foal in each of the years that the incumbent and prospective members of the Board of Trustees serve on the board. If the mare fails to conceive when bred or is unfit to breed due to health reasons, the incumbent or prospective member of the Board of Trustees must file a letter from a veterinarian certifying that the mare failed to conceive or the reason why the mare is unfit to breed.

If the incumbent and prospective member is a stallion owner, said stallion must be a registered stallion in the year in which the incumbent and prospective members serve on the board. Additionally, incumbent, and prospective members of the Board of Trustees shall file qualifications as breeder members, in writing, to the TBANJ office prior to filing application for election and prior to the first meeting each January.

If you are interested in nominating a member in good standing, please contact a member of the nominating committee no later than Friday, Oct. 4, 2024. Nominating committee members are: Cameron Beatty (732) 966-5804, Mike D'Antonio (201) 317-2432, and Karen Wilkin (732) 685-6466.

EQUI-PHOTO, INC.

Riding Pretty impressive in Eleven North Handicap

Trainer Eddie Owens Jr. had a trio of highlights to choose from after the New Jersey Thoroughbred Festival at Monmouth Park Aug. 25, with Sea Streak winning the Charles Hesse III Handicap, Riding Pretty taking the Eleven North Handicap and Rock the Rainbow, a 2-year-old filly who won her debut by 18 lengths.

He opted for the Holly Crest Farm homebred, Riding Pretty, as his stable star of the day.

"For me today, Riding Pretty was the most impressive," he said. "She hadn't sprinted since she was 2 years old. So that was impressive. The filly [Rock the Rainbow] I knew would run well. I didn't know she would win by that but I knew she was ready. But Riding Pretty was the most impressive of the three winners for me today."

Riding Pretty, usually a solid closer, dueled with Bel Pensiero for most of the stretch of the 6-furlong Eleven North Handicap for fillies and mares, 3 and up, finally pulling away for a 1-length victory. Bel Pensiero was 7¾ lengths better than Beach Daze in third.

The winning time was 1:10.34.

It marked the 4-year-old filly's first time sprinting in her past 18 starts, since the 5-furlong Colleen in July 2022.

"I blew her out in :34 on Thursday to make sure I had enough speed in her," said Owens. "I was just hoping she didn't fall too far behind early. But being a race where there wasn't a lot of speed I knew they were not going in 21 [seconds] for the first quarter so I expected her to be a little closer than normal.

"There was really only one speed horse. When we didn't shake her [Bel Pensiero] at the top of the stretch I was a little worried because that other filly is a good one. Jairo timed it just right. I knew we were going to have run by Bel Pensiero and it was better that we fought her from the top of the stretch than the sixteenth pole to the wire. I don't know if we would have won if he waited."

Riding Pretty won the Smart N Classy Handicap June 2 against fellow New Jersey-breds by 7½ lengths going 1 mile for her other stakes win this year.

EQUI-PHOTO, INC.

Smithwick's Spice as good as ever winning the Select Stakes

New Jersey-bred Smithwick's Spice, coming in off a win against Delaware-certified allowance foes, pulled off a 25-1 upset in the $100,000 Select Stakes against open company at Monmouth Park Aug. 18. He battled for the early lead with Xy Speed, wrestled control and pulled clear in the stretch, and was all out to hold off the late surges of favorites Nothing Better and Senbei to prevail by a nose. He's now a two-time stakes winner on the year, having previously won the Leinster Turf Dash in February at Tampa Bay Downs. The New Spice Stable homebred gelding is trained by Doug Nunn and was ridden by Jorge Gonzalez.

"I knew he would have to move up a little to win this and he did," said his trainer. In the race he won at Delaware in the start before this, the fractions were :25 and :49.2 to the half, so the race didn't take much out of him. That was 7½ furlongs, and I thought he would be even better at 5½ furlongs as fit as he is now.

"I really thought going in that we were the speed," continued Dunn. "But he didn't break sharply and kind of had to rush up to get the lead. But he had just enough left. He's as good as he has ever been right now and that's saying something for an 8-year-old."

"The idea was to go right to the lead but my horse did not break well," said Gonzalez. "But then he really picked it up and went right after [Xy Speed]. It just took him longer to make the lead than I thought.

"He was at his best today. But I was a little worried late. I saw horses on both sides of me right as we hit the finish line, but I knew he poked his nose in front. I have ridden him before, so I know him. This is the best he has been for me."

Smithwick's Spice (Frost Giant—Spicy McHaggis, by Good and Tough), also winner of the Joey P. Handicap in 2022, has reached the winner's circle in 12 of his 46 starts while earning $640,367.

EQUI-PHOTO, INC.

Sea Streak resilient in Charles Hesse III Handicap

Holly Crest Farm homebred Sea Streak overcame a slow start, was wide early and then had enough left to score a 1½-length victory over 9-year-old veteran Amatteroftime in the $125,000 Charles Hesse III Handicap, the second stakes on the New Jersey Thoroughbred Festival card Aug. 25.

The winning time for 1 1/16 miles was 1:45.39.

Sea Streak was coming off a fifth-place finish, getting nosed out for fourth, in the Grade 1 NYRA Bets Haskell Stakes July 20.

"I was a little worried [in the Hesse]. He got too far back. But he was the best horse," said trainer Eddie Owens. "He lost a shoe. We don't know when, but Jairo Rendon said in the stretch he was getting in a little bit. I don't know if that affected them. He outclassed them today."

Sea Streak recorded his third victory from 10 career starts, with seven of those on-the-board finishes. Owens said the 3-year-old gelded son of Sea Wizard will now get a prolonged rest.

Though appearing a bit sluggish at times, Sea Streak flashed some of the form that saw him win the Long Branch Stakes at Monmouth Park May 11 by 7¼ lengths.

No Cents, who battled Sea Streak for the early part of the stretch, was third.

"I wanted to be right there with him but it got a little crowded, so I decided to take him back a bit and let the pressure go away," said Rendon. "I took him outside where he would be relaxed. He lost a shoe, maybe out the gate because he jumped to the inside at the start. I'm not exactly sure when it happened. But he was good enough in here."

North Carolina

THOROUGHBRED ASSOCIATION

October 2024

President's message

Congratulations to Frank B., Beth M., Dan S., Bill T., and Caroline C. for their horses' victories. For all of you whose horses made it to the track, you are to be commended for your hard work and faith in your horses.

As I am winding down my position, and your new leadership team comes on board, there will be a transition period with some overlap in duties.

I was able to meet with Bonnie, Lynn and Steve. They are eager to learn and get started by infusing their enthusiasm into the organization.

There will be a new NCTA address as the current P.O. Box will expire at the end of November. I hope you will continue to support the NCTA.

Remember that all memberships expire Dec. 30. All your renewals will go to the new NCTA address.

–Rebecca

Race Reviews

Mom's Martini, a 2-year-old daughter of Liam's Map, won at first asking for owner Dan Shea at Gulfstream Park. Photo Credit: Ryan Thompson/Coglianese Photography

Nabokov, by Uncle Mo out of Peppy Rafaela, by Bernardini, won at Belterra Park July 27 for breeder Frank Batten. The 5-year-old bay horse ran 5 furlongs on firm turf in :56.88. Nabokov quickly took the lead and held sway to win by 1½ lengths.

Double Tough Tiger, by Tourist out of She'sa Tough Tiger, by Tiger Ridge, won at Camarero Racetrack July 28 for breeder Beth Muirhead. The 6-year-old dark bay or brown gelding ran 1 1/16 miles on a muddy dirt track in 1:43.90. Double Tough Tiger ran off the pace, took the lead in the stretch, and pulled away, proving much the best to win by 11 lengths.

Champagne Camie, by Speightster out of Ice for the Lady, by Flatter, won at Del Mar Aug. 1 for breeder Beth Muirhead. The 5-year-old bay mare ran 6 furlongs on a fast dirt track in 1:11.16. Running against a full field, Champagne Camie stalked the pace through the backstretch, gained on the front runners on the turn, dueled into the lane, and took control down the stretch, winning by 4 lengths.

Mom's Martini, by Liam's Map out of Jazzminegem, by Mineshaft, broke her maiden at first asking Aug. 9 at Gulfstream Park for owner Dan Shea, Shea D Boy's Stable. The 2-year-old gray or roan filly ran 5 furlongs in :59.23 on a sloppy (sealed) track. The youngster paced in the third lane, angled out to the fifth lane, gained on the pacesetters at the top of the stretch, got into a duel from the inside, but rallied to win by three-quarters length.

Magic Token, by Good Magic out of Funny Holiday, by Harlan's Holiday, won at Colonial Downs Aug. 11 for owner Bill Williams. The 3-year-old bay filly ran 1 mile on the inner firm turf in 1:36.98.

Magic Token took the lead early and never gave it up. She won by 3¾ lengths.

Managing Mischief, by Maximus Mischief out of Enchanting Essence, by Midshipman, won at Thistledown Aug. 21 for owner Carolina Cooper in partnership. The 3-year-old bay filly ran 6 furlongs in 1:11.06 on a fast dirt track. Managing Mischief chased the pace two wide, catching and, passing the leaders at the quarter pole, opened up mid-stretch by 3 lengths to eventually win by 1¾ lengths.

Cairo Caper, by Cairo Prince out of Summer Clothes, by Summer Front, won the Soaring Free Stakes at Woodbine Aug. 23 for owner Bill Thompson. The 2-year-old gray or roan gelding ran 6½ furlongs on a good turf in 1:16.25. Cairo Caper stalked the pace from the outside, went four-wide around the turn, gained ground, and drew off to win by three-quarters of a length.

Hitting the Board

July 25 – August 24, 2024

Date	Horse	Track	NCTA Connection	Results
25-Jul	Flat Out Flying	Delaware Park	Bred by Beth Muirhead & Frank Coniglio	3rd
27-Jul	Nabokov	Belterra Park	Bred by Frank Batten	**WINNER!**
28-Jul	Double Tough Tiger	Camarero Race Track	Bred by Beth Muirhead	**WINNER!**
1-Aug	Bourbon Diversion	Colonial Downs	Bred & owned by Bill & Carrington Price	3rd
1-Aug	Champagne Camie	Del Mar	Bred by Beth Muirhead	**WINNER!**
6-Aug	Taproom	Fort Erie	Owned by Bill Thompson	2nd
7-Aug	Come on Arlene	Belterra Park	Owned by Caroline Cooper	3rd
7-Aug	Termsofengagement	Penn National	Bred by Nancy Shuford	2nd
9-Aug	Mom's Martini	Gulfstream Park	Owned by Dan Shea - Shea D Boy's Stable	**WINNER!**
11-Aug	Magic Token	Colonial Downs	Owned by Bill Thompson	**WINNER!**
12-Aug	Cainudothetwist	Colonial Downs Randolph D Rouse Mem. S.	Bred by Bill & Carrington Price	2nd
16-Aug	Cayenne Creek	Charles Town	Bred by Clint Lowry	2nd
16-Aug	Frosty Ria	Charles Town	Bred & owned Clint Lowry	2nd
17-Aug	Contrivance	Laurel Park	Bred & owned by Bill Thompson	3rd
17-Aug	Raise a Ruckus	Charles Town	Bred & owned by Clint Lowry	2nd
17-Aug	Champagne Camie	Del Mar	Bred by Beth Muirhead	3rd
21-Aug	Managing Mischief	Thistledown	Owned by Caroline Cooper in partnership	**WINNER!**
23-Aug	Cairo Caper	Woodbine Soaring Free Stakes	Owned by Bill Thompson	**WINNER!**
23-Aug	Double Tough Tiger	Camarero Race Track	Bred by Beth Muirhead	

North Carolina Thoroughbred Association

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PENNSYLVANIA HORSE BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

PA Thoroughbred NEWSLETTER

October 2024
pabred.com

PA-BRED REMINDERS

- **Early registration:** Within 365 days of foaling
- **Yearling registration:** Dec. 31 of yearling year
- **Stallion registration:** Feb. 15 of year breeding
- **Broodmare domicile:** Dec. 1 or 14 days after a public sale or entering state if being bred back to PA-sire

VISIT PABRED.COM

- **Racing and breeding news**
- **PA-Bred entries/results**
- **Rules, regulations, forms**

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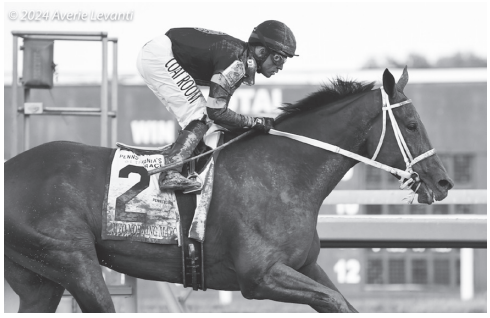
PA-Breds Shine on 23rd Annual Pennsylvania's Day at the Races

Gordian Knot won the Jump Start S.



Morning Matcha won the Mrs. Penny S.

The 23rd annual Pennsylvania's Day at the Races took place on a beautiful afternoon at Parx Racing on Monday, Aug. 26. Hundreds of breeders attended the luncheon and enjoyed a variety of raffles, including a John Deere Zero-Turn Mower donated by NTRA, and a card featuring some of the best Pennsylvania-breds in training. FanDuel was on site for the 11-race card, and race-calling icon Larry Collmus provided picks and interviews throughout the day.

Maiden special weights featured purses of $65,000, while allowances touted $70,000 and stakes events stood at $100,000, for a total of $870,000 in purses.

Two-year-old fillies kicked off the card in a 5½-furlong event. A field of 10 entered the gate, and the wagering landed on first-time starter Anabam as the 3-2 favorite. Shipping in from Penn National for trainer Todd Beattie, Anabam skipped to the front and never looked back, drawing away to a 6¾-length victory. The daughter of Weigelia was bred by Dr. Stephen Morrone, Dan Kimball and John Spendolini out of the Disco Rico mare Moonstone Beach. Owned by Morrone and Kimball, she's a half-sister to stakes-placed $246,546-earner Dr. Steve (by Jump Start). Hope-forgreatness and Vivi Rose completed the tri.

Eight maidens, 3 and up, lined up for the second race, restricted to PA-Sired, PA-Bred runners. Traveling 6 furlongs, 14-1 longshot Uncle Winchester took over approaching the quarter pole and opened up a 3-length lead that would hold safe to the wire. It was the third start, following two runner-up finishes at Delaware Park, for the 3-year-old son of Uncle Lino. The Michael Catalano Jr. trainee was bred by Clyde W. Martin Jr. and purchased for $4,500 by John Julia at the 2022 Fasig-Tipton Midlantic Fall Yearling Sale. He's a half-brother to stakes winners You Need Me and Mollys Missb'havin and was the first winner for owner Katie DeCanzio. Addyson's Dream was second while Prince of Chill checked in third.

The third race was a 1 mile and 70-yard allowance race. Even-money favorite In Spades dueled through the early lead before opening up at the top of the stretch and holding sway for a 4¼-length win over Warrior's Vendetta and Check My Six. The 4-year-old son of Peace and Justice was bred by Steve Young's A1A Racing and is owned and trained by Felissa Dunn. It was his fifth victory from 19 starts.

Ten maiden fillies and mares, 3 and up, competed at 7 furlongs in the fourth race. Eleventh time was the charm for 10-1 shot Mikey's Song. Sitting eighth in the early going, the daughter of Exaggerator moved up along the inside around the

PA Day at the Races continued from page 1

turn to get within 2½ lengths of even-money favorite Beautifulcrazygirl. Continuing to rally strongly up the rail, she snagged her foe in the final strides to post a neck upset victory. Trained by Melecio Guerrero and owned by Price of Entry LLC, the 3-year-old was bred by Victoria M. Herlinger and purchased for $24,000 as a yearling at Timonium.

The fifth race saw eight colts and geldings, 3 and up, cover 6½ furlongs. Kohler's, the 7-10 favorite, broke last from the gate but quickly rushed up inside of horses to sit just behind the early pacesetters. He took command once the field turned into the stretch and, while wandering about, ultimately held off longshot Humble Joe for a three-quarter-length victory. The 3-year-old colt by Bandbox is a homebred for SMD Ltd./Avalon Racing Stables and a stakes-placed half-brother to their stakes-placed runners Miss Avalon and Seventeenohsix.

Two-year-old colts and geldings traveled 5½ furlongs in the final maiden race on the card. Half of the eight to face the starter were making their debuts, and the money was smart in installing one of those, Dansk, the slight post time favorite at 5-2. Tracking just off the early pace, the son of Uptowncharlybrown took command turning for home and pulled clear to an easy 4¼-length win over another first-time starter, Smile Maker, with Dr. Lou third. Sent out by trainer Mike Pino, the colt is a homebred for Smart Angle LLP.

Stakes action kicked off in the seventh race with the $100,000 Marshall Jenney Handicap at 5 furlongs. Moved from the turf to the main track, the field featured five entrants. With three horses vying for favoritism, lost in the shuffle was 9-year-old Smooth B, winner of the Marshall Jenney the last time the race came off the grass in 2022. Joined in a three-way duel for the early lead, Smooth B slipped past Traders Luck along the rail and drew off to win by 3½ lengths at odds of 7-1. The son of Weigelia is out of St. Omer's Farm's brilliant broodmare Katarica Disco (by Disco Rico). Bred by St. Omer's and WynOaks Farm and owned by LC Racing, Smooth B boasts earnings of $893,447 with 11 wins, 13 seconds and nine thirds in 61 starts. Traders Luck held second over charging longshot Keithsendshelloooo.

PA-Sired, PA-Bred runners, 3 and up, were featured in the Jump Start Stakes going 7 furlongs, and a strong field of six lined up. Ninetyprcentmaddie took heavy money off his strong graded stakes showings in New York, with Gordian Knot a clear second choice in the wagering. Defending champion Veeson dueled through early fractions alongside 2023 PA Nursery winner Capo, while Gordian Knot tracked in the clear before sweeping past the vying pair in the final furlong. The 4-year-old gelding hit the wire 1¼ lengths in front while Capo held second over Veeson. Ninetyprcentmaddie was fifth, beaten eight lengths. It was the first win of the year for Gordian Knot, a son of Social Inclusion who now boasts stakes wins at ages 2, 3 and 4. A homebred for Joe Imbesi, Gordian Knot now features seven wins and four thirds in 14 starts for earnings of $529,730.

The Storm Cat Stakes squared off a field of six over a mile and 70 yards. With a hot and contested early pace of :23.29 and :47.03 being laid down on the front end between favored Movisitor and Windsor Gold, 5-2 second choice Irish Cork was content to trail in last, six lengths off the lead. Margin of Air got the jump on the frontrunners and opened a 2- length lead at the top of the stretch, but Irish Cork and rider Frankie Pennington chugged along up the rail to collar the leader. The gray pulled away to a 2½-length win over Margin of Air, while Market Maven checked in third. A 7-year-old son of Flat Out, Irish Cork was making his 41st career start and posted his first ever stakes victory for trainer John Servis and owners Irish Three Racing LLC. Bred by Two-Turn Farm LLC, Irish Cork was a $15,000 weanling purchase at Keene-

Continued on page 4

A few words from the Executive Secretary

By the time you receive this letter, two of the biggest days in Pennsylvania racing will have taken place. The Masters at PID and the PA Derby at PARX Racing, featuring a pair of G3s, G2s, and G1s. Some of the best horses anywhere will have competed including Thorpedo Anna!

Don't forget about four $100,000 PA-Bred Stakes which included our PA-Sired PA-Bred Series kickoff! Those races for 2yos and 2yo fillies will carry a $50,000 breeder bonus for horses that finish first, second and third in total points for the series: $25,000 for first, $15,000 for second and $10,000 for third. This bonus will be paid after the 3yo races in 2025.

I'd like to thank PARX Racing, Presque Isle Downs, the PTHA and the HBPA for their hard work getting everything ready for these huge days. These events play an important role in PA Agriculture. Our industry supports PA farms, 23,000 jobs, hundreds of thousands of acres of open space, hundreds of small businesses and $1.6 billion in economic impact to our great State!

If you are still using paper registrations, please make sure you forward a signed copy of the Code of Ethics, which is attached to the registration form. We will be transitioning to paperless the beginning of 2025. As usual, please contact our office with any questions you may have. Wishing you a fantastic finish to 2024, and remember, PA is the only place to Breed and Race! Over 30 million paid out to PA-Bred owners and breeders in Breeder Awards, Owner Bonuses and Restricted Races. Go PA!

RUN YOUR PA-BRED 2YO IN THE KEYSTONE STATE!

$800,000 IN PURSES

EIGHT $100,000 STAKES LEFT FOR 2YOS IN THE LAST 4 MONTHS OF 2024!

parx racing	Saturday, Sept. 21	2YO PA-SIRED PA-BREDS: $100,000 WHISTLE PIG STAKES $100,000 MISS BLUE TYE DYE STAKES	 2YO PA-Sired PA-Breds, 6 furlongs 2YO fillies, PA-Sired PA-Breds, 6 furlongs
presque isle downs & casino	Monday, Oct. 14	$100,000 FINEST CITY STAKES	2YO fillies, 6 furlongs
presque isle downs & casino	Monday, Oct. 21	$100,000 MARK McDERMOTT STAKES	2YO, 6 furlongs
Penn National	Wednesday, Nov. 20	$100,000 SHAMROCK ROSE STAKES	2YO fillies, 6 furlongs
parx racing	Wednesday, Nov. 27	$100,000 PENNSYLVANIA NURSERY STAKES	2YO, 7 furlongs
parx racing	Monday, Dec. 30	2YO PA-SIRED PA-BREDS: $100,000 WAIT FOR IT STAKES $100,000 MISS BEHAVIOUR STAKES	 2YO PA-Sired PA-Breds, 7 furlongs 2YO fillies, PA-Sired PA-Breds, 7 furlongs

Become part of the Pa-Bred action!

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2023 IMPLY STAKES WINNER
WITH OVER $100,000 IN BREEDERS AWARDS

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land November in 2017. His record now stands at eight wins, 11 seconds and eight thirds in 41 starts and earnings of $530,222.

While the Mrs. Penny Stakes was reduced to six when coming off the turf, it allowed the opportunity for Morning Matcha to run as a main track only entrant. With earnings standing at over $970,000, a victory would anoint the 5-year-old mare as racing's newest millionaire. A heavy 2-5 favorite in the 1 1/16-mile event, Morning Matcha tracked 6 lengths back in fifth before dropping to the rail and blowing past the leaders. Quickly opening up 4 lengths at the top of the stretch, she drew away under her own power for a dominate 11¾-length score to become a millionaire in style. Mia Tosca held off re-rallying frontrunner Nature's Candy by a head for second.

It was the fifth career stakes victory for Morning Matcha, whose record now boasts eight wins, seven seconds and seven thirds and earnings of $1,029,940. Bred by Clovis and Joanna Crane's Crane Thoroughbred Services LLC, she was an $18,000 yearling purchase for LC Racing at the 2020 Fasig-Tipton Midlantic Fall Yearling Sale. Owned by LC Racing, Cash is King, and Gary Barber and trained by Butch Reid, Morning Matcha is the 34th Pennsylvania-bred to earn over a million dollars on the racetrack.

The 11th and final race was a 6½-furlong allowance for fillies and mares. A field of 11 faced the gate and a wicked early pace resulted in a pace meltdown. Confirmed Star, the 5-2 second choice, settled 7 lengths back in ninth down the backstretch before commencing a strong, but wide, rally around the turn. Meanwhile, favored Flamingo Way was moving up along the rail. Confirmed Star and Flamingo Way emerged the two leaders as they turned for home, dueling through the stretch before Confirmed Star started to inch clear. The 4-year-old daughter of Uptowncharlybrown owned by Cash is King LLC and LC Racing LLC ended up a half-length in front of Flamingo Way at the wire, who in turn held off the fast-closing 64-1 longest shot Pachelbel for second.

Confirmed Star was bred by Uptowncharlybrown Stud LLC and is a full sister to stakes winner Oxana. She was a $32,000 Fasig-Tipton Midlantic May 2-year-old purchase by LC Racing and now has been first, second or third in 10 of her 12 starts.

A total of $2,633,466 was handled on the card. A big thank you to Parx Racing and the PTHA for helping the PHBA conduct another successful PA Day at the Races!

PA-Bred Fund Statistics: Top Earners

January 1 through July 31, 2024

LEADING EARNERS - TOTAL AWARDS

Breeder Name	Breeder	Stallion	Total	Breeder Name	Breeder	Stallion	Total
Warriors Reward	328,041	88,790	416,831	Glenn E Brok LLC	146,075	39,856	185,932
Uptowncharlybrown Stud LLC	270,661	128,521	399,182	Wyn Oaks Farm LLC	60,904	83,219	144,123
Steven W. Young Racing LLC	186,856	66,143	252,999	Arrowwood Farm Inc	121,291	0	121,291
Northview Stallion Station Inc.	0	241,764	241,764	Pewter Stable	89,895	28,702	118,597
Blackstone Farm LLC	194,141	0	194,141	Sylmar Farm Inc.	102,322	0	102,322

LEADING STALLIONS

Fund Money includes Stallion Awards only

Stallion Name	Stallion Owner / Manager	No. of Races	Award Total	Stallion Name	Stallion Owner / Manager	No. of Races	Award Total
Uptowncharlybrown	Uptowncharlybrown Stud LLC	306	128,521	Peace and Justice	Steven W Young Racing LLC	136	66,143
Warrior's Reward	Warriors Reward	246	88,790	Social Inclusion	Social Inclusion Partners LLC	108	60,490
Uncle Lino	Northview Stallion Station Inc	182	87,986	Jump Start	Northview Stallion Station Inc	132	33,459
Hoppertunity	Northview Stallion Station Inc	214	87,166	Winchill	Pewter Stable	81	28,702
Weigelia	Wyn Oaks Farm LLC	186	81,634	Well Spelled	Godstone Farm LP	77	28,672

LEADING HORSES

Fund Money includes: PA-Bred Races, Breeder and Stallion Awards and PA-Bred Owner-Bonus Payments. **Denotes PA-sired*

Horse	Pedigree	Breeder	Races	Stakes	Breeder Award	Stallion Award	Bonus	Total
Fierce and Strong *	Hoppertunity - Doubleclickdamouse	Ultra Championship Racing LLC	4	62,220	35,060	8,765	6,250	112,295
Twilight Dancer	Tapiture - Moonlight Basin	Warriors Reward	6	58,200	21,856	0	7,780	87,836
Traders Luck *	Weigelia - Deanies Dancer	Sylmar Farm Inc.	6	0	43,176	10,794	30,840	84,810
Dontlookbackatall *	Peace and Justice - Celtic Arch	Steven W. Young Racing LLC	1	55,200	22,080	5,520	0	82,800
Rosie's Alibi	Justify - Essential Rose	Blackstone Farm LLC	3	57,000	19,890	0	4,650	81,540
Far Mo Power *	Uncle Lino - J. D. Safari	Peter Giangiulio	3	52,800	21,120	5,280	0	79,200
Respirator *	Peace and Justice - La Padrina	Dennis Johnson	8	0	43,776	10,944	24,240	78,960
Social Lady *	Social Inclusion - Graemy	Glenn E. Brok LLC	7	0	43,200	10,800	24,000	78,000
Greavette	Astern (AUS) - Convertible	Farms LLC	1	59,400	11,880	0	0	71,280
Catty's Uncle *	Uncle Lino - Just Catty	Sebastiano Ciaccio	8	0	35,280	8,820	25,200	69,300

**Denotes PA-sired*

SCTOBA

South Carolina

Thoroughbred Owners & Breeders Association

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2024

Racing Across the Nation

From July 22 to Aug. 12, five horses who went through the breaking process or trained in South Carolina crossed the finish line first in stakes races.

Twilight Dancer showed guts and determination winning the Hard Spun Stakes at Presque Isle Downs July 22. He faced a traffic-filled journey and prevailed in a hard fought stretch duel by a head. Since then, Twilight Dancer added an allowance, making it three wins in a row. He learned his early lessons at Randy and Kala Rent's training center in Erhardt.

Little J P, also a Rentz Farm graduate, broke on top and never looked back in the Starter Stakes Sprint Series at Grand Prairie July 2, winning by 4 lengths. This was Little J P's third win in a row and his fifth win since May.

On Aug. 4, Roanan Goddess was much the best in the field for the Searching Stakes at Laurel Park. Last for the first half-mile, she came up between horses before angling to the outside and pulled away from the field in the stretch, crossing the finish line 6¼ lengths in front. This filly is trained by Hamilton Smith, brother of the Elloree Training Center owner, Franklin "Goree" Smith who prepared her for her racing career.

Dream Shake, a former student of Cary Frommer's breaking program in Aiken, returned from a nine-month layoff to capture the Van Clief Stakes at Colonial Downs Aug. 11. Racing mid-pack during the first half of the race, Dream Shake found a clear path at the top of the stretch and put in a strong rally to get up to win by three-quarters of a length.

On the steeplechase front at Colonial Downs, Exculpate quickly opened up a large lead in the Randolph D. Rouse Memorial Stakes. She took a breather, letting her lead shorten before kicking in and drawing away to win by 15½ lengths! Exculpate is trained by SCTOBA member Arch Kingsley and owned by the Kingsley family – Arch, Wendy and Taylor.

Dam of classic winners has South Carolina connection

Puca, by Big Brown out of Boat's Ghost, is the dam of classic winners Mage and Dornoch. As a yearling, Puca was prepared for her racing career at Franklin "Goree" Smith's Elloree Training Center.

As a racehorse, Puca recorded four wins, two seconds and a third, earning $299,406. She won the Steve Pini Memorial Stakes at Suffolk Downs in 2017 and was Grade 2-placed at 3 in the Gazelle Stakes at Aqueduct.

Puca's sons, 2023 Kentucky Derby-G1 winner Mage and 2024 Belmont Stakes-G1 winner Dornoch, are full brothers, both by Good Magic. Mage earned $2,507,450. Dornoch, also winner of the Haskell Stakes-G1, has career earnings of $2,427,275. Puca's 2024 foal is a full brother to these two.

Aikinites visit Palace Malice in Japan

A group of South Carolina Aiken students visited Aiken-trained 2013 Belmont Stakes-G1 winner Palace Malice in Japan. Dr. Judy Beck, dean of USC Aiken's School of Education said, [We wanted] to take our greetings, and peppermints, to Palace Malice and assure the Aiken community that their favorite horse is thriving in Japan."

Palace Malice was campaigned by Cot Campbell's Dogwood Stable. While in Aiken, he was trained by Legacy Stable's Brad Stauffer and Ron Stevens.

Palace Malice began his stud career at Three Chimneys in Kentucky in 2016. This year, he stood his first season at Darley Japan on the island of Hokkaido.

Thoroughbred Racehorse Auctions 101

Kip Elser's Kirkwood Equine Advisory recently held a seminar in Saratoga. The topic was "Thoroughbred Racehorse Auctions 101." Elser described the event, "We were delighted with the recent seminar all about the basics of Thoroughbred auctions which covered pedigree analysis, auction etiquette and more, for a group of eager individuals who are interested in all things Thoroughbred racing." The seminar had a renowned consignment sales expert and two veterinarians who explained the ins and outs of what they do.

The purpose of the event was to take out the intimidation factors that might hold people back from taking the leap into Thoroughbred racing ownership and be as informed as possible.

Kip Elser's goal is to hold more seminars at upcoming auctions.

From the desk of...

….Congratulations to **Franklin "Goree" Smith** who celebrated the anniversary of his 29th birthday Aug. 14. Smith has developed many stakes horses and jockeys over the years at his Elloree Training Center, sight of the annual Elloree Trials. He also has been recognized as South Carolina's Breeder of the Year several times.

…. Legacy Stable's Ron Stevens reports **Eons**, developed in Aiken for his racing career, has been retired and will soon begin his second career as a stable pony.

This 8-year-old gelding, a son of Giant's Causeway, won six stakes including the Grade 3 Kent in 2019. During his career, Eons earned $711,485. Owner Mark Grier's parents lived in Aiken for several years.

South Carolina-trained winners

Horse	*Training Center*	*Date*	*Track*	*Type of Race*
Bustin Away	Rentz Farm Training Ctr	07/22/24	Finger Lakes	Allowance
Missy Sixtysix	Rentz Farm Training Ctr	07/22/24	Parx Racing	Starter Allowance
TWILIGHT DANCER	Rentz Farm Training Ctr	07/22/24	Presque Isle	Hard Spun S
Doctor Abbie	Rentz Farm Training Ctr	07/24/24	Delaware Park	Starter Allowance
Ballad of Warrior	Rentz Farm Training Ctr	07/24/24	Presque Isle	Maiden Special Weight
Kohler's	Rentz Farm Training Ctr	07/24/24	Parx Racing	Starter Allowance
Tudox Opportunity	Rentz Farm Training Ctr	07/24/24	Penn National	Allowance
In the Chase	Travis Durr Training Ctr	07/25/24	Saratoga	Maiden Special Weight
Irish Exit	Travis Durr Training Ctr	07/26/24	Laurel Park	Allowance
Summer Whirl	Aiken - Cary Frommer	07/27/24	Saratoga	Maiden Special Weight
Baltic Fire	Mason Springs	07/27/24	Del Mar	Maiden Special Weight
Fourfiftyfour	Travis Durr Training Ctr	07/27/24	Woodbine	Allowance
Pharoah's Wine	Elloree Training Ctr	07/27/24	Ellis Park	Allowance
LITTLE J P	Rentz Farm Training Ctr	07/28/24	Grand Prairie	Starter Stakes Sprint Series
Sweet Anniversary	Rentz Farm Training Ctr	07/28/24	Finger Lakes	Allowance
Lucky Speech	Rentz Farm Training Ctr	07/28/24	Ellis Park	Allowance
Quinn's Promise	Elloree Training Ctr	07/29/24	Ellis Park	Allowance
Cattivo Ragazzo	Rentz Farm Training Ctr	07/31/24	Delaware Park	Maiden Special Weight
Dear Santa	Aiken - Legacy Stable	08/02/24	Penn National	Allowance
Stop the Cap	Elloree Training Ctr	08/02/24	Laurel Park	Starter Allowance
Storms of Life	Travis Durr Training Ctr	08/03/24	Woodbine	Maiden Special Weight
Life Is Precious	Mason Springs	08/04/24	Gulfstream Park	Maiden Special Weight
ROANAN GODDESS	Elloree Training Ctr	08/04/24	Laurel Park	Searching S
Sweeping Giant	Elloree Training Ctr	08/05/24	Thistledown	Starter Allowance
Classic Legacy	Travis Durr Training Ctr	08/07/24	Saratoga	Allowance
Akimbo	Rentz Farm	08/07/24	Thistledown	Maiden Special Weight
Reigert Girls	Rentz Farm	08/07/24	Presque Isle	Maiden Special Weight
Ice Express	Elloree Training Ctr	08/08/24	Horseshoe Indianapolis	Allowance
Banned For Life	Aiken - Cary Frommer	08/10/24	Saratoga	Maiden Special Weight
DREAM SHAKE	Aiken - Cary Frommer	08/10/24	Colonial Downs	Van Clief S
Mister Mitch	Travis Durr Training Ctr	08/19/24	Laurel Park	Maiden Special Weight
Irish Exit	Travis Durr Training Ctr	08/11/24	Laurel Park	Allowance
Cashlings	Elloree Training Ctr	08/11/24	Grand Prairie	Allowance
Single Dot Yaht	Travis Durr Training Ctr	08/12/24	Ellis Park	Allowance
I Am Glass	Elloree Training Ctr	08/12/24	Thistledown	Allowance
Happy Instead	Rentz Farm Training Ctr	08/12/24	Finger Lakes	Maiden Special Weight
EXCULPATE	Arch Kingsley	08/12/24	Colonial Downs	Randolph D. Rouse Memorial
Donegal Dreamer	Elloree Training Ctr	08/14/24	Evangeline Downs	Maiden Special Weight
Heavy Pour	Rentz Farm Training Ctr	08/14/24	Presque Isle	Allowance
Wish Me Home	Custom Care - D. Freyer	08/16/24	Laurel Park	Allowance
Chuck Adams	Rentz Farm Training Ctr	08/16/24	Penn National	Starter Allowance
Jay Jay Dee	Rentz Farm Training Ctr	09/16/24	Penn National	Allowance
Catty's Uncle	Rentz Farm Training Ctr	08/16/24	Penn National	Allowance
Cattivo Ragazzo	Rentz Farm Training Ctr	08/17/24	Delaware Park	Starter Allowance
High Dollar Date	Aiken - Cary Frommer	08/19/24	Mountaineer	Starter Allowance
Royal Suspect	Travis Durr Training Ctr	08/19/24	Finger Lakes	Allowance
East Coast Girl	Travis Durr Training Ctr	08/19/24	Finger Lakes	Allowance
Beauty's Bangle	Rentz Farm Training Ctr	08/19/24	Finger Lakes	Maiden Special Weight

VIRGINIA

TROMBETTA AND JOHNSON DOUBLE UP ON COMMONWEALTH CHAMPIONS DAY AT COLONIAL DOWNS

Hollywood Walk holds off Mystic Seaport and Bosserati to win the $150,000 Camptown Handicap at Colonial Downs (Coady Media).

Trainer Mike Trombetta and owner Larry Johnson scored the natural double on Commonwealth Champions Day at Colonial Downs, as Hollywood Walk grabbed her first stakes score in the $150,000 Camptown and Sky's Not Falling took the $150,000 Bert Allen Handicap.

The connections were a nose away from a third score, as the filly Sail Theseven Seas finished second to War Humor in the $125,000 Jamestown, the opening handicap of five for Virginia-bred, -sired and -certified horses. The Camptown, Bert Allen, $150,000 Meadow Stable and $150,000 Nellie Mae Cox brought together Thoroughbreds from all three categories; the Jamestown, Virginia-bred and -sired 2-year-olds.

"You hope to have a day like this," Johnson said. "You look at the form and you think 'we could win a few races.' It doesn't always turn out that way. The 2-year-old (Sail Theseven Seas), it was her first time on the grass. She was a little green into the stretch and it cost her. The other two (Hollywood Walk and Sky's Not Falling) ran terrific. They're all doing really well. I've had 10 or 11 seconds this meet, so it's nice to get a couple firsts."

Rallying up the rail down the stretch, Hollywood Walk seized the lead with a furlong to go and had just enough left in the tanks to win the 5½-furlong Camptown Handicap by a neck over Mystic Seaport. The 5 year-old Animal Kingdom mare was piloted by Horacio Karamanos."I was stuck for a moment in the middle of the turn waiting for someone to move," Karamanos said. "I saw a hole split to get out, then dropped back inside. It was a perfect trip. I got lucky but it turned out to be a good decision to wait."

"Karamanos, he likes to win," Johnson said. "He made a difference in that race. I thought she was going to get stuck, but he dives down to the rail and wins the race. We've been trying to get a stake win for her. She's a half to Mindframe. She's a really nice filly and just tries every time."Larry Johnson and R.D.M. Racing Stable's Sky's Not Falling seized command early and ran away from the field late to take the 1 1/16 miles Bert Allen Handicap by three lengths in gate-to-wire fashion. Piloted by Antonio Gallardo, the 6-year-old gelded son of Seville (Ger) was sent off as the 8-5 favorite.

"I saw today there was no speed in the race," Gallardo said. "Whatever is for free is for free. I didn't want to rush him but he broke sharp, felt comfortable on the lead, nice and relaxed, and I think that's why he finished strong."

In the 5 ½ – furlong Jamestown Stakes, Eric Rizer's maiden War Humor ran down Virginia Fitz and survived a photo finish over the lone filly Sail Theseven Seas to win by a nose. Trained by Ollie Figgins and piloted by Forest Boyce, the son of Mosler was sent off at 13-1."He's just improved every race, just figuring out how to run, to be honest," Figgins said. "Honestly I think the horses he ran against are pretty legit horses. Most likely the Maryland Million (will be next for him), he's Maryland sired."

"I thought he ran great," Boyce said. "Ollie does an incredible job. I thought we were sitting a great trip. He finished strong. Luckily we held on. I realized after the wire (Sail Theseven Seas was coming late). I didn't think they were getting there. She must have been closing pretty strong."

Winning her second stake of the 2024 meet, Susan Moulton's Tufani sat a perfect pocket trip and tipped out in the stretch to

Hollywood Walk's winning rider Horacio Karamanos discusses the Camptown with owner/breeder Larry Johnson (VEA photo).

Virginia Yearling Futurity Grand Champion Paynted By Nancy is a Virginia-bred filly (Hannah Jones photo)

score in the Nellie Mae Cox Handicap by two lengths. Earlier in the meet, Tufani took the Brookmeade in a similar dominant fashion. In the familiar hands of Ben Curtis, the Mike Stidham trainee was sent off as the 3-5 favorite.

"She's really matured and blossomed since her winter at Fair Grounds," Curtis said. "She's very professional and easy to ride. Before we wouldn't dream to put her up behind the speed. On paper there wasn't any speed. The way it transpired, they walked the dog on the lead there. It just shows how good she is that she was able to overcome it. Another step forward, another nice prize for the owner, so a good day all around."

Repeating in the 5½-furlong Meadow Stable Handicap, Determined Stables and Kingdom Bloodstock's Determined Kingdom fought off Whenigettoheaven to win by ¾-lengths. Along with the Punch Line, the Phil Schoenthal trainee racked up two local stakes, both for the second time. Determined Kingdom also finished an impressive third against open company in the Van Clief with Victor Carrasco in the irons for all three local stakes.

"He's a great horse and he has proven that he can run against anybody," Carrasco said. "I want to thank Phil (Schoenthal) for trusting me and giving very clear instructions. He said 'whatever you do, just make sure you don't get boxed in.' Determined Kingdom came out of there running. I tried my best to stay outside to make sure (Whenigettoheaven) either had to use too much trying to get in front of me or to drop in behind me. It worked out."

PAYNTED BY NANCY SCORES GRAND CHAMPION HONORS AT VIRGINIA BREEDER'S FUND YEARLING FUTURITY AUGUST 26

Virginia-bred filly Paynted By Nancy scored Grand Champion honors at the Virginia Breeder's Fund's 23rd annual Yearling Futurity held August 26th at the Warrenton Horse Show Grounds. Owned by Daniel Wukich and bred by Quest Realty, the daughter of Paynter won the divisional title for Virginia-bred/sired fillies earlier in the day and advanced to the final round along with the top two finishers from three other classes. The champ is out of the Jump Start mare, Jumpin' Nancy.

Second place in the final round went to an Un-named Independence Hall dark bay colt owned and bred by Larry Johnson. Named Reserve Champion, the Virginia-bred is out of Everything Magic by Street Sense. The competition was judged by thoroughbred trainer Ferris Allen, a Varina, Virginia native who is the leading all time trainer at Colonial Downs. A total of 33 yearlings participated in the competition which offered a total of $40,000-plus in prize money — 75% divided among the four division participants at the venue and 25% to Futurity graduates who are eligible for a bonus after their three-year-old racing season is complete.

Following Paynted by Nancy in the Virginia-bred/sired fillies category were a pair of 2023 Un-named fillies both owned and bred by Morgan's Ford Farm. The runner-up is by Midnite Lute out of Skipstone by Montrock while the third-place finisher is by Maxfield out of Love and Marriage by Arch. Toot was next, owned and bred by Eagle Point Farm, followed by an Un-named chestnut by Promises Fulfilled owned/bred by Joni Fontana Sugarland LLC, an Un-Named by Great Notion owned/bred by Sugarland LLC Equine Etiquette, an Un-named bay by Divining Rod owned/bred by Darlene Bowlin and an Un-named bay by Rock Your World owned/bred by Daybreak Stables.

In the Virginia-bred/sired colt & gelding category, Johnson took second place in addition to his Reserve Champion score — an Un-named dark bay by Global Campaign out of Classy Coco by Not For Love. Next was a pair owned and bred by DMC Racing Stable — Me Naughty Juba and Between the Lines — followed by Irish Nunsense (Wukich/Quest Realty), Broadside Salvo (Helen Masek), Sound of Freedom (Tim Hulings & Analia Larrosa) and Elmington (Kathleen Hamlin).

Of six that competed in the Virginia-certified colt & gelding division, Rebel Prince was awarded a ribbon and first place prize money. Ron Sapp is owner and breeder of the winning gray who is by Cairo Prince out of the Yankee Gentleman mare, Rebel Lady. Runner-up went to an Un-named chestnut by Improbable owned by Sugarland LLC and bred by Country Life Farm & Indexation LLC.. I Am Pepe, by Always Dreaming, took third for Sugarland LLC and breeder The Stables at Mezza Lunam LLC. Rounding out the field was Billy Boy (Michael Horning, Debbie Horning), an Un-named bay by Divining Rod (Sugarland LLC/Super C Racing Inc.) and an Un-Named bay by Paynter (Sugarland LLC/Hickory Ridge Farm).

Futurity Reserve Champion was an Un-named Independence Hall dark bay colt (Hannah Jones photo)

Determined Kingdom wins the Meadow Stable Handicap at Colonial Downs with Victor Carrasco up (Coady Media).

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For more information on the Virginia Breeders Fund or Virginia Stakes Program, please contact the VTA.

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Virginia Breeders Fund

West Virginia
THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS ASSOCIATION
Newsletter October 2024

Charles Town Classic Night: 2024 locals dare to dream

By Jeff Gilleas

On Friday night, Aug. 23, the tallest peaks in the Mountain State were staged at the Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races.

Anyone looking for an impressive snapshot of the pervasive equine talent on the North American continent needed to journey no farther than a small corner of the Eastern Panhandle.

The $1-million Charles Town Classic and $750,000 Charles Town Oaks were just two of the soaring heights charged with invigorating home town scenery.

Of nearly equal status on the festive card was the $500,000 Robert Hilton Memorial Stakes.

Formulated by previous director of racing Erich Zimny, to satisfy a Classic ideal, and preserved with the devotion a mother cares for her child by current predecessor, Charles McIntosh, every attention to detail was made to provide the public access to the leaders of the industry.

Since moving the Oaks and Classic to the same evening, the blockbuster program has produced five of the six largest single-card handles in track history.

CLASSIC

Following challenging assignments in New York and New Jersey, in an attempt to secure graded earnings, Coastal Mission primed for the Classic by sleeping in his own stall, training over familiar ground, and savoring partisan comments of encouragement from home town fans.

Wednesday morning, Aug. 14, the phone in director Charlie Mac's office was intentionally neglected, as the busy gentleman took time out to survey Coastal Mission's final tune-up for the 1⅛-mile Classic. Macintosh exclaimed to railbirds, "touted himself pretty good, half-mile in (47 seconds flat)."

The crossover from dream to reality was only a few days away for trainer Jeff Runco and his team at barn 13. By midday Saturday, the overnight was executed and the son of Great Notion was a participant in the 16th running of the Grade 2 Charles Town Classic.

Track announcer/odds maker, Paul Espinosa Jr., immediately set to task installing Saffie Joseph's $2.4-million earner Skippylongstocking as an even money choice.

Said Espinosa, "Last year's winner of the Classic is a trendy player with natural route speed, but the inspirational, feel good Cinderella story of the night remains Coastal Mission (6-1). Regardless of distance, the push-button horse with a daunting local record has a convincing relationship with Charles Town's sandy surface."

The 10-horse Classic field was entrusted to starter Fran DiAmario, tabbed the man behind the button, and his band of headers and pushers. Coastal Mission, West by God Virginia's prospect, tried a lively pre-race warm up, but lacked his normal "grab the bit" enthusiasm. When post time approached, the eyes of every spectator was glued on the gate, as the bell sounded sending the field away to a balanced shot at glory.

At the break it was Skippylongstocking's intent for the lead under jockey Jose Ortiz. Setting realistic fractions 'Skippy' was kept alert throughout and grew untouchable late, drawing off to a lopsided 5¾-length victory. Coastal Mission initially raced wide, dropped to the rail on the far turn, and never unfurled his patented constructive response and finished fourth.

The highly anticipated duel between two gunfighters never materialized for the disappointed townsfolk.

OAKS

Since the passing of her husband John, skeptics have been waiting for Cyndy McKee to falter under the pressure of managing a large scale breeding farm and racing operation. Instead, the soft-spoken president of the West Virginia Thoroughbred Breeders Association has met the challenges head-on and exceeded all expectations.

In the Charles Town Oaks her Beau Ridge Farm was represented by the rapidly improving filly Overnight Pow Wow. The muscular daughter of Fiber Sonde and Holy Pow Wow was fresh from a stunning victory over stablemate Direct the Cat in the Sylvia Bishop Memorial, posting a career best Beyer speed number of 94.

The 2024 edition of the Oaks, with a purse increase to $750,000, and its Grade 2 status rendered Overnight Pow Wow an opportunity to duplicate her full sister Late Night Pow Wow's path to stardom. Like her 10-1 victory in the Bishop, Overnight Pow Wow again was cast in the role of a decided underdog.

The McKee-bred with appealing bloodlines was in front at first call, but could not sustain her taxing rate of pace. Fading to fourth near the shadow of the finish line, OPW exhibited many of the desired characteristics of the accomplished entrants in the open stakes field. She appears firmly capable of carrying the load until Direct the Cat's return to competition.

HILTON

The loss of her partner John Casey has created a void where Kristy Petty's coping mechanism has been twofold: her son Allen and the otherworldly 3-year-old gelding Jubawithatwist. From head-to-toe, the son of Juba—Romantic Cork is Taylor Mountain Farm influenced and Casey/Petty shaped.

While clearly tough and talented, the multiple stakes winner is averaged size though well-proportioned. Versus West Virginia-breds, his acceleration is immediate and overpowering. Regular rider Gustova Larrosa stated, "This horse has multiple gears. He's smart and not hard on himself. I'm optimistic."

In the loaded Hilton Stakes, Jubawithatwist was facing a very high bar, tempered somewhat with the defection of Grade 1 winner Book'em Danno. Stable agent Chad Larsen commented, "Kristy really wants to try her once-in-a-lifetime horse against tougher company. She believes America is the land of opportunity and this is her shot."

The silver blur (Jubawithatwist) normally adapts to any scenario, however his proximity to the horse that flipped in the gate (adjacent stall), not only threatened injury, but his chances for success. Just yards from the gate, the talented sophomore appeared frustrated, as he couldn't dictate terms from his last-place berth. Navigating thru traffic, Jubawithatwist tried to overcome his epic gate confrontation, but when clear could only rally for a minor share (fourth).

Rider and horse galloped back dejected to the saddling enclosure, but the heart both exhibited made every West Virginian proud. According to lifetime horseman and longtime backstretch manager, Mike Elliot, "The marketing department revolutionized how fans approached the night of racing. A lot of hard work and effort were expended. At the end of the day, it proved horse racing isn't solely about winning or losing, it's also about family and relationships."

From a ground level perspective, stars night out checked all the boxes, while demonstrating West Virginia horses belong with the sports elite. Their efforts established they are not sacrificial lambs to the invading roll call of graded talent. In defeat, the greatest outcome bestowed Runco, McKee and Petty was superior to money. . . Respect!

West Virginia Thoroughbred Breeders Association

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Chasing
Brought to you by the Temple Gwathmey Steeplechase Foundation

Same? Different? American 'chase work-study participants find a bit of both in Irish experience

By Betsy Burke Parker

It lived up to its billing as the trip of a lifetime.

That's the report from all three participants in the Temple Gwathmey Steeplechase Foundation Developing Rider trip to Ireland.

Phoebe Fisher, James Wyatt and Beverly Alcock each earned participation for the sponsored training trip by writing winning essays and soliciting letters of recommendation from U.S. steeplechase professionals.

The assignment – go, ride, learn.

And come back and put it to work back home.

Phoebe, James and Bev with Irish trainer Gordon Elliott

It's the 10th anniversary of the Ireland trip, and the retention rate for the racing world has been high, say program founders Sam Slater and Lornie Forbes.

"Lornie and I thought it might be a good idea before the first trip happened in 2014, because we had the location and the resources to do it," Slater explains. "Lornie had worked in an Irish racing yard for a season when she was starting out, and felt that exposure had been invaluable to her, so it might also be to the young Americans coming on the trip.

"I think our vision for it has largely been borne out, thanks to the hard work of trip leader Regina Welsh, the TGSF and of course all the riders involved.

"The idea was to expose aspiring American jump jockeys to the much larger world of Irish jump racing. We knew not all of the riders who went through the program would end up riding a lot of races back home, but we feel that many might stay involved in the sport, perhaps as trainers, owners, racing officials, etc.

"Seeing what a big deal the sport is in Ireland might give them some perspective on possibilities for the future at home.

"The fact that so many of our 'graduates' have stayed involved in racing or other horse-related endeavors is extremely gratifying. We feel the program has very much lived up to that original idea, and we hope to continue it for a long time to come."

Welsh says a few program grads were lured into other careers after college and a couple have drifted away from the horse world. But most of them, Welsh maintains, have taken everything they learned abroad and applied it directly or indirectly to the American 'chase scene.

We checked in with the class of 2024 with two simple questions: What did you find the same about Irish steeplechase training? Different?

PHOEBE FISHER (Unionville, PA)

"I started college a few days after we got home from Ireland, so I'm a little distracted!

"But the trip was a great experience.

"There were so many differences that stood out to me. The environment is a big one and how it affects the training and the horses. (The weather is) on the cooler side and more even temperatures throughout the year.

"The effects are really apparent. An obvious example is year-round racing, the grass quality and the ground itself. It is so much softer.

"But, at the end of the day, horses are horses. I was all nervous in the beginning, but once I got on a horse, it was back to what I know.

"We gallop in America. We galloped in Ireland. The fundamentals were the same.

"I will say, the saddles at Willie Mullins' were very different from what I have used before. They were much more structured and looked like a mix between an exercise

saddle and an English saddle.

"Another difference, (not many people use exercise) walkers at home. So seeing walkers at every barn was interesting.

"The footing (famously soft, deep and holding) makes the horses work pretty hard. You can see in some of the pictures that their hooves were completely engulfed in the (dirt) – deeper than anything I've (ridden) on at home.

"Willie's had a deep wood chip track, where a few large chunks came up and hit me with some force!

"It was fun to make (friends with) the cafe owner in Cashel. Bev and I talked to him while having our tea and coffee, about how big the coffee culture is in America.

"Tea time is the essential in Ireland. Personally, I am a big fan.

"Willie Mullins was so great to us, and Jessica Harrington's yard was so impressive. There were three 50-horse sets that went out daily.

"I definitely want to go back. The atmosphere, the training and the races are all something I really want to explore more."

BEVERLY ALCOCK (Philomont, VA)

"The way they train is very different. A lot of uphill work and slower gallops, where we train more on the flat and faster galloping.

"And, the horses all went on walkers after training, where we don't really do that.

"It was an incredible experience that I was so blessed to be able to go on. I learned a lot and am very thankful."

JAMES WYATT (Monkton, MD)

"Each trainer we rode out for was a great experience.

"I'd always wanted to visit Ireland, and this trip definitely lived up to my expectations. I met so many people and made so many connections that will be very helpful with my career as a steeplechase jockey.

"The thing that was the most different was how many people we were riding out with. Back home, especially in steeplechase barns, I have barely seen more than five in a set, but in Ireland, some of the larger yards could have 50 horses going out at once.

"The environment at the races was actually quite similar (as back home.) The crowds are very enthusiastic both in the U.S. and Ireland.

"My favorite part of the trip was getting to jump with Enda Bolger on his farm. The horses were incredible, and the (wide variety of cross-country-style schooling) jumps were very fun to ride over.

Beverly leads James and Phoebe while galloping for trainer Pat Doyle

James, Bev and Phoebe with 2022 Ireland Trip participant Taylor Kingsley, who finished a good second on Pierre Manigault's horse in a bumper (flat race for steeplechase horses) at the Galway Races.

"I'm so grateful for this experience. I loved every minute of it.

"Though, my least favorite part of the visit would probably be the driving. Many of the places that we went to were far apart, and the roads in Ireland are so much smaller and have so many more turns than they do back home.

"Not very enjoyable car rides."

History of the TGSF Ireland Trip

Program facilitator, pack leader, chief cheerleader and tour guide Regina Welsh says American steeplechasing is in a great place, in part because the international work exchange continues to flourish.

Look no further than respected sport-horse veterinarian Dr. Jacob Crotts (2014 program participant) and current leading international jockey Taylor Kingsley (2022) for proof that the unique blend of work and play in the ancestral home of steeplechasing is helping back home.

Three young riders with ties to the U.S. jump racing endured a long, detailed application process over the last few months to make the final cut. Phoebe Fisher, Beverly Alcock and James Wyatt were selected for the July 20-27 trip.

By exposing young American horsemen and women to the top training yards and racecourses in Ireland – the cradle of steeplechasing, Welsh says the domestic circuit will reap decades of rewards.

The first TGSF trip to Ireland was in 2014, envisioned by former TGSF president Sam Slater and his wife, Lornie Forbes.

Since, there have been 24 participants in the innovative program, with a startling 100 percent "retention" rate. Every one of the program kids since 2014 are involved directly or indirectly in racing – a few are active jockeys, some are trainers or assistant trainers. One worked at the management-level for a breeders' association, another went back to school and now works as an equine vet at a top clinic near Middleburg, Virginia. Program participant in 2022, Taylor Kingsley currently tops the Fegentri international jockey leaderboard.

Regina Welsh helped create the program a decade ago.

"Sam Slater (had come) to me with the idea of taking young riders to Ireland to experience what Irish racing is like and asked me to take the reins," for the first trip, Welsh explains. "Without Sam and his wife Lornie, this trip would absolutely not be possible.

"Where we go is pretty iconic. (Like always, the trip) is a little fluid, but the riding-out line-up includes Pat Doyle, Fozzy Stack, Jessica Harrington, Gordon Elliott, Shark Hanlon, Willie Mullins and Enda Bolger."

The group visited Ballydoyle, the Irish National Stud, RACE – the Racing Academy and Centre of Education in Kildare – for a lesson on the mechanical horse with jockey-instructor Paddy Flood, the Galway Festival and more.

— Classifieds —

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— Looking Back —

75 years ago

■ Writer Joe Palmer reported that although Christopher Chenery's Hill Prince was the 2-year-old division topper with six wins in seven starts, including a record-setting victory in Aqueduct's Cowdin Stakes, plans were afoot to finish his season in the Champagne Stakes.

The Cowdin turned out to be his final outing of the year. However the Virginia-bred colt had done enough to take the Daily Racing Form*'s year-end honors, his first of three championship seasons. The 1950 Preakness winner and 1950 Horse of the Year was inducted into the National Museum of Racing Hall of Fame in 1991.*

■ The Maryland Racing Commission's proposed 1950 racing dates – 13 meets at 13 tracks (including harness) – were a bone of contention. The four major tracks were expected to operate meetings of 25 days in one stand rather than split seasons, which had been customary for Havre de Grace, Bowie and Pimlico. Only Laurel's annual fall meeting remained unaffected.

Among the questions: Would Bowie be willing to give up its place as an early spring meet? How would Havre de Grace deal with competition from New Jersey and Philadelphia? What would the impact be if Pimlico faced direct competition from a Washington, D.C.-area harness track? Added to this were the continuing concerns over conditions at Pimlico, as officials of the Maryland Jockey Club and Laurel remained anxious to close it.

■ The dispersal of Justin Funkhouser's O'Sullivan Farms breeding stock, slated Nov. 1 in the Charles Town, W.Va., farm's sales pavilion, was to be conducted by Fasig-Tipton. Among the offerings were mares by *Sir Gallahad III, Tourbillon and *Blenheim II, mares in foal to First Fiddle, Pavot and By Jimminy, and weanings by *Sir Gallahad III, First Fiddle "and other top stallions."

■ With a victory in the Maryland Futurity, Alfred G. Vanderbilt's Discovery son Foreign Affair was the fourth winner of that contest raised at Vanderbilt's Sagamore Farm.

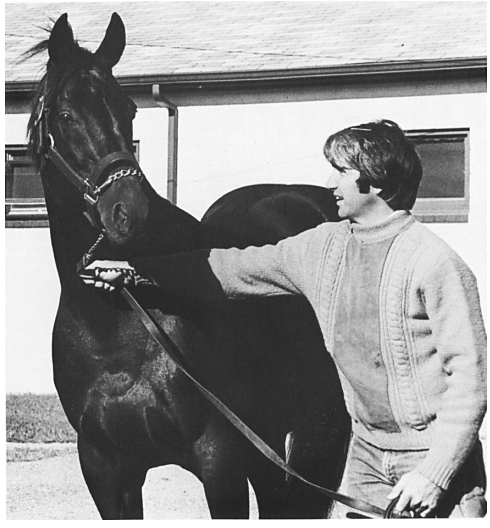
50 years ago

■ Milton Polinger's multiple stakes winner Court Ruling, a 4-year-old son of Traffic Judge purchased out of a paddock sale at Belmont as a non-winner of two for $32,000 the previous December, was retired and set to stud at his owner's farm in Olney, Md. Bred by C.V. Whitney, the blaze-faced chestnut had become one of the nation's best turf horses of 1974, his biggest win the $125,000 Hollywood Invitational Handicap.

Court Ruling stood one year in Maryland before moving to California after the separation of Polinger and his wife Helen. Two stakes winners came out of that first crop – stakes-producing filly Out Ruled and Eclipse Award-winning sprinter Guilty Conscience.

■ Snowden Carter covered the story of Rock Talk –"one of Maryland's hottest sires" – and his owner Michael Erlanger. The 10-year-old was standing at Edgar Lucas' Helmore Farm in Woodbine.

"The name 'Erlanger' is, of course, an old one in the Thoroughbred business," wrote Carter. "But most of the reputation achieved for the Erlangers can be attributed to Michael's mother, the late Mrs. Milton Erlanger. It was she, along with her late husband, who so successfully operated the Woodside Stud in New Jersey, and it was also she who purchased Maryland-bred Rock Talk from his breeder, Mrs. Joseph Walker, as a yearling."



JACK DEWELL

Helmore Farm manager John Williams leads young sire Rock Talk. Williams moved on to Kentucky to become general manager of Spendthrift Farm, later partnered in successful sales agency Eaton-Williams, and continues to be among the most highly respected horsemen in the industry.

From two crops to race in 1974, Rock Talk was the sire of stakes winners Kudara and Talc.

Also standing at Helmore, managed by John Williams, was Lucas' Northern Jove. A stakes-winning son of Northern Dancer who entered stud that spring, he was described as "the spitting image of his great-grandsire Native Dancer."

■ Windfields Farm owner E.P. Taylor became the world's leading living breeder of stakes winners. Previously tied with C.V. Whitney with 156 a piece, Taylor's number grew to 160 over the summer. The all-time mark of 192 belonged to Harry Payne Whitney.

■ The Chilton Book Company in Radnor, Pa., released the book *Secretariat,* by photo-journalist Raymond G. Wolfe Jr. It was described as a "never-before-published look into the world of that big beautiful chestnut who so captured the imagination of America."

One of many books about the Virginia-bred legend, this one is a classic for the photographs alone.

25 years ago

■ Bill Mooney examined two tracks on the verge of extinction in New Jersey. "They are situated in their respective locales, approximately 50 miles apart, in the midst of a modern era to which they don't belong. Their names are Atlantic City Race Course and Garden State Park. They occupy hundreds of acres in southern New Jersey, and there was a time, not long ago, when they were renowned as two of the finest sports facilities in the East Coast.

"Today, Atlantic City more resembles the hulk of an abandoned, decaying ocean liner stranded 14 miles to the west of the largest concentration of casinos on the Atlantic seaboard. And Garden State, just off the Jersey Turnpike in Cherry Hill, once dubbed "the race track of the 21st century," may not last beyond the first year of the new millennium."

Atlantic City ran abbreviated meets for more than a decade after the article was written, and closed permanently in January 2015. Garden State closed May 3, 2001.

■ Despite a fall four months earlier in which he was paralyzed from the chest down, 63-year-old Maryland steeplechase owner/amateur jockey Irv Naylor remained positive when talking with Joe Clancy. Judging by the number of projects Naylor had in the works, many promoting steeplechasing, Clancy noted, ". . . it appears that Naylor's mind still races at its usual high-rpm rate."

This past May, seven-time leading owner Naylor became steeplechasing's all-time leading owner by earnings ($9.06 million), surpassing George Strawbridge's Augustin Stable.

■ Inclement weather caused travel problems for several jockeys slated to ride in Mountaineer's rich West Virginia Derby, among them Mike McCarthy, who missed the call on Robert Meyerhoff's Stellar Brush. Trainer Richard Small turned to 21-year-old Joe Stokes. Expecting to be a spectator, Stokes stopped by the trainer's barn simply to say hello and came away with the ride. Besting 10 rivals by 9 lengths, Stellar Brush earned $150,000 of which $15,000 went to Stokes.

■ Maryland-bred Smart Guy won the 21st running of the $300,000 Pennsylvania Derby-G3. His breeder, James P. Ryan Jr., also bred and campaigned his sire Smarten, winner of the inaugural running in 1979. Purchased by trainer Tim Ritchey for $10,000 at the 1997 Fasig-Tipton Midlantic eastern fall yearling sale, Smart Guy raced for Goodfellas Stables, a partnership of Delaware businessmen Stewart Taub and David Malatesta.

■ High Yield, the Storm Cat colt whose $1.05 million price at the Keeneland July Yearling sale made him the most expensive Mid-Atlantic-bred sold at auction in 1998,

lived up to his name with a victory in Saratoga's Grade 1 Hopeful. Bred in Pennsylvania by Betty Moran's Brushwood Stable, the D. Wayne Lukas trainee raced for Bob and Beverly Lewis, Mrs. John Magnier and Michael Tabor.

10 years ago

■ It took 26 starts but 4-year-old Page McKenney got his first stakes win in Penn National's Robellino. Moved from turf to dirt, the field reduced to five starters and the Eavesdropper gelding bred by Dr. James Bryant and Linda Davis kicked away to his eighth win for owner Adam Staple and trainer Mary Eppler.

That was Page McKenney's stakes debut – he would race exclusively in stakes the rest of his career, another 32 starts. When he retired in 2018 he had 15 stakes wins, 14 stakes-placings, was a multiple graded winner and earned $1,905,940.

■ The Big Beast rocketed from maiden to Grade 1 winner in three starts for Alex and JoAnn Lieblong and trainer Tony Dutrow. Unraced at 2, the 3-year-old Maryland-bred won at Belmont in June, a Saratoga allowance in July, and that track's Grade 1 King's Bishop in August. The Yes It's True colt was foaled at his breeders' Ron and Carolyn Green's Green Willow Farm in Westminster. Named for his oversized frame and rollicking attitude, he took time to mature and tested the patience of Dutrow.

Exiting the King's Bishop with an ankle chip, The Big Beast returned an allowance winner the following March, placed in two Grade 1 sprints at Saratoga and was retired. However, that was enough to earn titles as 2015 Maryland-bred Horse of the Year, champion older horse and sprinter, to go with his 3-year-old divisional championship.

■ Three Tapit sons were scheduled to join the 2015 ranks of regional stallions: graded winner Bandbox at Northview Stallion Station and stakes-placed Tritap at Heritage Stallions in Maryland; and stakes winner Winchill at Pointer Farm in Pennsylvania.

■ Hardest Core, trained on the hills and fields and roads of Chester County, Pa., won the Arlington Million-G1 in an upset for owner Andrew P. Bentley Racing – the stable name of Bentley and his parents Greg and Caroline – and trainer Eddie Graham.

The son of Pennsylvania-bred star Hard Spun was purchased as a 3-year-old for $210,000 at Keeneland November in 2013. Gelded soon after, Hardest Core nearly died during emergency surgery at New Bolton Center to remove several feet of intestine. He recovered to win a stakes that summer at Delaware Park before his connections aimed high for his graded stakes debut in the Million.

■ Down Town Allen recorded her fourth win in Charles Town's Sadie Hawkins Stakes for breeder/owner/trainer John A. Casey, and 20th stakes win of her career. The 7-year-old West Virginia-bred daughter of West Virginia sire Windsor Castle bested the field of eight by 4 lengths.

What a Team

Maryland timber heroes Mountain Dew and Janon Fisher III prepare to compete in the 1967 Maryland Hunt Cup. They won the Hunt Cup in 1962, 1965 and 1967 – and finished second in 1963, 1964 and 1966. They also won six Grand National timber races together. A Baltimore native and Marine Corps veteran, Fisher died Sept. 9 at age 90, leaving behind family, friends and memories from decades with Thoroughbreds as an owner, trainer, breeder and rider.

Peter Winants was on staff at *The Maryland Horse* during the 1960s, writing and taking photographs for the magazine before heading to Virginia where he headed up *The Chronicle of the Horse* magazine and later the National Sporting Library. Before his death in 2009, he gifted his prints on file at the MHBA, which have become part of the Maryland Horse Library as The Winants Collection.

GRADUATES *Smoking* THEM

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